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Recreation and Significant Others
seeking post-work possibilities in contemporary choreography

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Recreation and Significant Others: seeking post-work possibilities in contemporary choreography

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of PhD

Department of Dance
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Abstract

At the centre of this research is a performance, entitled *Recreation*. This performance features in this thesis both as a constituent element, where the reader is invited to review video documentation of one of the live iterations halfway through, and as the primary choreographic work under examination. In this study, *Recreation* is followed from early making through to final production, its processes and actions pulled through conceptions of work and two of its supposed opposites: life and recreation. In turn, these frames are complicated and problematised through the lived experience of the practice and its description in order to come to a thinking-through of recreation as a set of qualities that are produced through as well as in resistance to work.

These ideas are then extended into another form of practice, curation, which frames three works by other artists: *LAURA LAURA DOUBLE PENETRATION* by immigrants and animals; *Assembly* by Nicola Conibere; and *Swarm Sculptures* by Lucy Suggate. What these works share with *Recreation* is not only their location in the British independent dance scene but in that they each feature non-professional dancers. In the final chapter of this thesis these works are examined in order to think about how performances with this latter attribute, and the relationships established within them through work and non-work, can offer a way of thinking about professional dance and community dance as each other's significant other.

As well as making an offering into contemporary discourses around choreographic practice, this research locates itself in vivid contemporary post-work thought. Employing an autoethnographic approach to artistic practice, the research makes use of political philosophy, mostly from contemporary post-work theory and its lineage, to explore the post-work potentials of contemporary choreography featuring non-professional performers.

Contents

Acknowledgements

I'll try to do this somewhat chronologically, which is, to a large degree, how this thesis works, and in something of a story, which is in line with the writing's tone. In spring 2014 I was told I would be receiving a grant which would make this research possible, so first I'll pause to thank the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Doctoral Training Partnership TECHNE. Shortly thereafter I met with my supervisors, Dr Simon Bayly, whom I had known at this stage for 4 years, and Dr Sara Houston, whom I had known for a whole decade. They asked me if what I had proposed was still the thing in which I was most interested. This question, with its generosity, and care for the necessity of sincere motivation and inspiration towards the object of research, as well as the foregrounding of and trust in my capacity to follow my intuition, set the tone for the subsequent four and a half years. I am so grateful for their genuine interest, their warmth, their kindness and their strength. They are very different people, and different scholars, but I admire and respect each for all of this as well as their shared practical nature, academic rigour and good sense of humour.

Part of the reason for this research taking longer than I had anticipated was also discussed at that first meeting: my mother's then newly-diagnosed terminal brain cancer. Cate Kleiman (née Gillie (really)) died in April 2016 after the most brutal 18 months or so of treatment, during which I moved back to my hometown of Newcastle to help. At the moment of diagnosis I told my father, Avner Kleiman, and her that I would postpone my PhD, or even drop out, to help. This was absolutely not going to happen after I saw their furious expressions appear beneath the tears and shock of the prognosis. I cannot thank them enough for their endless support. For my father's resolute awkwardness in not letting me pass up the opportunity to do this work, I am in awe. Regarding my mother and her full, colourful, social, loving life—and as I said at her funeral—I am bereft, and I am grateful. My storytelling nature is entirely, completely, fully hers.

The other part of the reason for this research taking longer than I had anticipated was the volume and complexity of the practice that is at the heart of the research. I hold so dearly the relationships I have cultivated through this process, particularly with Beckie Darlington, my long-suffering producer, and wonderful performers Amanda Drago, Kit Haigh and Victoria Guy. They are some of the best people I know and I am grateful for their open-hearted input into this process. I also thank Nicola Conibere, Jamila Johnson-Small, Mira Kautto and Lucy Suggate, whose work features in the final chapter of this thesis after being part of the festival I curated, Juncture, with Yorkshire

Dance. As well as Yorkshire Dance and its excellent team, I would like to thank all of the organisations and individuals who were involved in the practical elements of my research; there are too many to list here, but I do have a list, and I really do wish to extend thanks to every single last one of the hundred or so. For offering *his* practice to make this thesis legible, Matthew Tye deserves much more than the dinners I fed him.

I have had to call on my friends a great deal over the past years. I will try to list some of those who helped me in the darkest times, with such tremendous gratitude that I find my head bowing. I hope not to miss anyone, but I probably will, and know that I have not forgotten you but that this listing business is not easy. Aaron, Alexandrina, Alice, Amy, Blanca, Brendan, Carole, Charlie, Dawn, Geffen, Ed, Ellie, Erin, Flora, Hamish, Hannah, Harriet, Helena, Ilana, Iris, Jodie, Judith, Karin, Kate, Katy, Lizzie, Lucy, Marian, Michal, Nicola, Paul, Roberta, Rosa, Rose, Ruth, Sara, Sarah, Sarah, Serena, Sophie, Susie, Tessa, Tom, Vicky, Will and the Sangha at Newcastle Buddhist Centre: thank you, so much.

Introduction

Background

In 2013 I interviewed the choreographer Rosemary Lee for BELLYFLOP, the online dance magazine I co-ran.[1] I wanted to talk to her about her work in the widest sense, and this meant talking about her life. It meant her divulging how she went about her work now, and in the past. She talked about her family, her partner and her children, and introduced me to her son who was then in his early 20s. When he left the kitchen, whose table was the site of our conversation, Lee—known then and now to me as Rosie, from our slight connection as participants in the life of Chisenhale Dance Space—told me about his studies in music. She was proud of him, and happy for him, and their relationship, to be part of what she exposed to me. Lee told me about the financial circumstances through which she had been able to start her career, how state benefits and odd jobs were together enough to enable artists growing up around the 1980s to pursue creative work without the fear of destitution. She was candid enough to expose some of the details around her then set-up; when I sent her the written-up document—so long that I chose to publish it in a series of four articles—she asked to rewrite some sections for purposes, mostly, of privacy. We agreed that I would publish the texts with the changes marked with a different colour. The reader, then, was able to see the edges of what Lee felt she could and couldn't say. There was a rather equivocal response from my fellow BELLYFLOP co-editors, but the interview was widely shared and read. Many readers contacted me to let me know that they appreciated the contact between personal and professional lives, and the rendering legible of that contact in the form of the text.

Though I was interested in the details of Lee's life and work broadly, I was mostly, when choosing whom I might ask to interview for BELLYFLOP, interested in Lee's work with non-professional performers. I wanted to understand her motivations for this work, and how she went about recruiting,

1 BELLYFLOP Magazine was initiated in 2010 by Louise Mochia and from circa 2011–2014 was extremely active in the London dance scene, publishing hundreds of reviews of dance plus interviews and blog posts, as well as organising events independently and at the invitation of Sadler's Wells and Dance Umbrella. As well as Louise and me, the core team was Charlie Ashwell, Jamila Johnson-Small, Alexandrina Hemsley, Alice MacKenzie, Eleanor Sikorski and Flora Wellesley Wesley, all female or non-binary independent dance artists. The website and its contents are no longer available, so this interview is no longer accessible.

choreographing with and directing people who described themselves as non-professionals. Even more specifically, I wanted to talk to her about the fact that in a recent performance of hers, *Square Dances* (2011), I had noticed that the 'non-professional' cast of the women's dance was comprised of many professional contemporary dancers I knew from the London networks. Though I was satisfied with the depth and breadth of the interview, I felt I left with more questions than answers about the figure of the non-professional dancer—whether 'really' non-professional or not. The interview spurred a curiosity about what the actions and positions of non-professional performers in professional performances by professional choreographers says about contemporary dance in Britain, and what this, in turn, says about the nature of work in Britain.

It is not just Lee's work with non-professionals that triggers these questions. Many choreographers working in the UK work for one project or beyond with casts entirely or partially made up of non-professional performers, from more mainstream companies like Motionhouse or Protein Dance to experimental artists like Project O and Matthias Sperling. There is no scholarly research on this phenomenon. My initial suspicion, at the inception of this study, was that this was because there was a fear of the call of exploitation: if these dancers are doing a performance for which otherwise professional performers would be paid, are these choreographers, companies and producers practising a form of worker exploitation? Perhaps more common is the fear of being accused of pandering to funders' needs, particularly Arts Council England (ACE), the major funder for such works: if ACE wants a high beneficiary quota in relation to the funds 'invested', then not paying performers as workers but counting them as beneficiaries of the activity certainly satisfies that requirement well. I started this research, then, with a cynical point of view.[2]

Concepts, contexts, chronologies

As I began to watch many of these works my cynicism was set to one side (if not entirely put away). I wanted to see these works for what they might be doing beyond the knee-jerk mental yell of exploitation or pandering. Concurrently, I read from the (mostly recent) publications from post-work political theorists. In this literature, the writers are often, from a Marxist perspective, rejecting contemporary forms of work and welcoming automation, imagining, arguing about and figuring out strategies to herald a post-work future. The following chapters, along with the practice element of

2 The language of ACE changed in the 2000s from 'subsidised' to 'invested', distancing the body from subsidy and locating the work of the organisation more closely in relation to neoliberal demands for return on its contribution.

this research, places professional choreography with non-professional performers in relation to this thinking, a discourse which has emerged from a crisis of work in society. This crisis arises out of a set of conditions where income and work are tied to one another, but where this relationship is squeezed or pressured. This is perhaps most apparent in the political rhetoric and public response to Universal Credit, an amalgam of multiple state benefits which de-incentivises non-work, or in the rise of the so-called gig economy, where a stable income is difficult to acquire (just as in the original gig economy, the performing arts). Not only are income and work twisted together, but identity and self-worth are connected too to paid work. Moreover, there appears to be an insufficient amount of 'full-time', paid work for every adult of working age to do (Beckett 2018). This can be seen in the panics around everyday automation—most notably self-checkouts in shops—as well as increasing momentum around the implementation of either a shorter working week, universal basic income (UBI), both, or other devices for shifting the focus from paid work to other things whilst allowing most people to retain a way of life to which they are accustomed in a rich country (Large 2018).

This research situates choreography made with non-professional dancers in this milieu, in post-work discourses which continue to gain both momentum and traction, with new texts by key writers expected within months of the submission of this thesis (Aaron Bastani's *Fully Automated Luxury Communism: A Manifesto* and Helen Hester and Nick Srnicek's *After Work: What's Left and Who Cares?* will be published in 2019 and 2020 respectively). This research asks, then: when work is 'everything', what happens when some people are doing what appears to be work (performing in a performance) but it isn't quite work? The chapters that follow, along with the performance component, are an attempt to think about these issues in plural ways, always guided by an interest in how the figure of the non-professional performer, and the conditions through which their status and activity come about, might be offering a choreographic response to the questions offered by contemporary thinking on work and post-work.

The performance component, entitled *Recreation*, can be seen as one of the objects of research and as the core method; it can be seen as a context, but also requires contextualisation. It has an independent, public life, having been produced and presented as any other of my choreographies have been in my work as a professional independent choreographer. It has multiple institutional partners and a creative team who collaborated in its production and creation, though I am the sole author. It explores the area of interest detailed above through choreographic and theatrical means, through movement and speech and song and lighting and set and props and the relationships between all of these in relation to a live audience in the moment.

I will not give a detailed description of *Recreation* here, as it is discussed in great length over the coming pages: three of the four chapters of this thesis are dedicated to the detailed description and analysis of the performance and its production. However, for further context, it is important to say something about how the project was organised and a little about who was involved. The making of *Recreation* was led by me with the support of Beckie Darlington, a producer with whom I have collaborated since 2013. Though I was clear I wanted to make a work with non-professional performers, I was not sure how to structure this or whom exactly to invite. The first phase of making was an exploratory one, in which I invited many different performers with different levels of experience and different senses of status in relation to professional contemporary dance. I worked with different combinations and numbers of people each day, discovering through doing what felt comfortable and challenging and generative. After some conversations with trusted friends and colleagues, I decided that the structure of a core cast with guest dancers at each venue offered the most interesting complications whilst being realisable logistically and financially. The final work was (apart from in one case, indicated below) performed by three core cast members, each of whom had a different relationship to the figure of a professional dancer, and two guest performers sought locally to the venue. Each rehearsal period, during production and touring, included an open-rehearsal-cum-workshop to which the guest performers would come and be joined by local professional and community dancers.

The chronology of the making of *Recreation* is one of a number of temporalities with which I have grappled during this research. The practice happened in stages and it has often felt that one section of time pushed against the other in an uncomfortable way, usually because of fundraising cycles. In relation to this tempo is the chronology of the thesis, whose chapters follow the major stages of practice and production and, perhaps, frame them in a form in which each stage is even less fluid than the clunky chunks of time of arts administration and production. As *Recreation* and its related activities developed, so did my ideas, so the thesis has a sense of the developmental, a chronology through which things move by growing. The writing itself seeks to produce a sense of time which lines up with the sometimes slow pace of production and somnambular atmosphere of *Recreation*, using description, story and even occasionally imagined dialogue to give access to the rhythm of studio or stage through the act of reading.

A final major chronology is an intellectual one. As described above, I have found myself within a political-philosophical zeitgeist, unanticipated when I began the project. The publishing on and interest in post-work are fervent. I have chosen to stick to the temporality of zeitgeist, focussing mostly on recent concepts. I have selected not to give genealogies of concepts but to work with

them as they are used in the current time, not ignoring their lineages but focussing my attention within the limited scope of this research project to a contemporary encounter between a particular set of current choreographies and a particular set of current thinking which has so far had little contact with dance and performance in artistic or scholarly domains.

I do wish to pause briefly to comment on one pair of terms which has appeared already a number of times in this text and continues to be a thread throughout the thesis: professional and non-professional. I do not wish to provide a definition for these terms; I did not do that in the practice, but asked individuals and groups to self-identify. With *Recreation* I always described the cast as having different relationships to the idea of being a professional dancer; I left the distance between the classification and the experience deliberately active, open to discussion, available for investigation. Far from trying to evade the question, the approach I have taken in this thesis is to leave available space for moving around these definitions from the different points of view the practice has offered. The writing which follows does not deal with this head-on—it is concerned with other, albeit related, things—but the question of what a professional or non-professional is, what a professional or non-professional does or does not profess, remains visible.

Structure of the submission

Just as I want to avoid overwriting *Recreation* in this introduction, I will not provide an extended précis of each chapter here; instead, I offer a concise guide to the contents of the thesis. In Chapter 1, I reflect upon the research and development period of *Recreation*'s production process, a fortnight of work across Newcastle and Nottingham in January 2016, thinking about how these weeks of activity expose and extend qualities associated with contemporary labour. I think through the process into the dynamics of contemporary work, using the experience of working with many participants with many forms and levels of dance experience and other professional or personal interests in a workshop-cum-creation process, to offer a depiction of choreographic labour which muddles its relationship to common themes in the philosophy of work.

In Chapter 2, I go on to think about the central creation weeks of the performance from December 2016 to June 2017, thinking about one of many potential alternatives to work, 'life', and how it seeps out of the very workerly activity of creating an artwork. In this I focus on three themes—care, grief, and sabbath—that appeared out of the activities, relationships and emotions of the rehearsals, seeking a lifefulness that could contend with labour's emphasis on economic value.

It is after this chapter that I invite the reader to watch the documentation of *Recreation*'s presentation at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead, recorded in November 2017. The performance has been documented at every possibility, including at the Shoreditch Town Hall, London; a presentation which the examiners attended. That performance was a difficult and unusual one, primarily because one of the core performers of the work was injured and had to be replaced at short notice, resulting in a markedly stressful preparation period for the whole team, including the other performers. As well as being free from this additional pressure, the Gateshead rendition was expertly filmed by the in-house archive team, resulting in a very clear and accessible video. Despite the fact that I consider this documentation successful, it is no true replacement for the live experience; it is the performance itself that is included as part of this work, and the documentation is a way to make that temporally and spatially possible, but I want to insist that the practice is not its documentation.

In Chapter 3 I turn to *Recreation* as a cultural artefact in its own right whilst holding my position as its creator. Through the performance and its encounter with audiences, I bring in further thinking from the post-work discourse, a field in which texts are being published at an alarmingly fast pace and whose outputs sit in relation to less academic discussions (such as the Green Party's policies on work and various journalistic articles and popular texts about UBI). Through *Recreation* I connect this to recent writing in the psychodynamics of work to think about what recreation as a way of living could be, problematising its resistance to work and considering what a leisure ethic could produce.

The final chapter moves the thinking to a new set of choreographic works related to a festival I curated with Yorkshire Dance, Leeds, in 2016. This festival, Juncture, contained only artworks where non-professionals took the place of professionals in one way or another. The festival itself is not offered as part of the doctoral submission, nor is the festival and its curation the real subject of Chapter 4, though it is an important backdrop (and I have included a copy of the festival's programme in the appendices for reference). Instead, I look at three of the works shown within Juncture, discussing their practices of work and non-work in relation to community dance and associated participatory practices.

The thesis closes with thoughts about a future project whose interests continue, extend, and press against those of this research.

Methodology and influences

This thesis belongs with practice. 'Belongs with' could be replaced with a range of different prepositions. I would believe most versions to be true, though this one feels the truest. What I mean to say with this is that the writing and the practices are deeply intertwined whilst each remains whole and complete; they are not the same thing but one doesn't exist without the other. It is by practising choreography that this thesis was written; it is by working with theory that the performance came to be made. As such, this thesis fulfils the practice-as-research paradigm.

Alongside and within the practice and the necessary bibliographic work I undertook a series of interviews. Some of these were short question-and-answer sessions during rehearsals, with the participant-performers and sometimes with viewers. I also undertook semi-formal interviews with the two solo and one pair of choreographers whose work I discuss in Chapter 4. As the research progressed, it became clear that these interviews were for useful for contextual purposes and my thinking did not rest on them; as such I have not included transcripts. They are never cited directly.

I have found that the examination of my own experience within the processes of working and living has been the most generative place for the production of new thinking in relation to the questions of the research. As such, I describe this research as autoethnographic, a deep mining of my own experience to unfold observations and analysis of broader social questions. I have adopted a highly reflexive writerly position, and have attempted to work with an understanding of writing as a method of inquiry, in that the detail of the craft of writing is critically useful and impactful in relation to the content; as a result, the reader may notice strategies less usual for theses, such as extended description, accounts of events from my personal life, and alternative layouts, as suitable for the work of each chapter. I have positioned my own experience as being particular, whilst also hoping to make a contribution or even a change to the worlds that produce and contain that experience. I have thought about the potential readers, both in terms of the process of examination and of any future readers of this or a related text. All of these are aspects or qualities of a method that is usually called autoethnographic (Adams et al, 2014).

This way of working results in perhaps some unusual results in relation to the concepts of work and leisure, which are often studied through lenses of class, race, gender, migration status, language and other intersecting identities associated with societal, structural and personal privileges and oppressions. I am a white-presenting, cisgendered, native-English-speaking, middle-class(-ish) woman, and speak from this position as well as from someone who is binational, culturally Jewish,

living with a chronic illness and who was, for much of the period of research, a carer. Mostly I do not work with these identities or the frames which make them socially and culturally important, not because I do not think that they are important tools for the study of choreography, work, post-work and recreation but that I have chosen other important tools, tools belonging to practice-as-research and political philosophy in relation to autoethnography. Despite the fact that this is not proclaimed as a feminist study, I believe that it is one, and this viewpoint runs through the written thesis and the performance. I state this particularly to connect the post-work thinking back to its feminist roots—Kathi Weeks' *The Problem with Work* (2011), the grounding for Chapter 2 and indeed for much of today's post-work thinking is framed around explicitly feminist organising—and to look forward to forthcoming publications in the area, which promise to advance the discourse's feminist potentials.

The methodological frames employed in this thesis (practice, bibliographic work, interviews, autoethnography) are emphasised differently from chapter to chapter. I have taken time in each section to restate and elaborate the methods deployed, so will not offer more detail here. It does seem important, however, to foreground three texts which have been most influential in the way in which I have thought and written during the project overall. First is filmmaker and writer Chris Kraus' *I Love Dick* (1997), a novel which wraps fiction around memoir to create a literary force which hurtles surprisingly towards distinctive art criticism. Without the deeply personal and highly descriptive accounts of her actual experience, Kraus' reflexivity and thus the potency of her art-writing would be insufficiently situated or energetic. The second text, influential in terms of both method and content, is feminist philosopher Donna Haraway's *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People and Significant Others* (2003). Like *I Love Dick,* this pamphlet-style book also draws directly from the writer's real-life experience. It is this insistence across her philosophical work in working from storytelling—sometimes described as 'speculative fabulation' (Terranova 2016)—which connects the methods of philosophy and autoethnography in a manner which has inspired my approach to this research. *The Companion Species Manifesto* is also the primary critical interlocutor in Chapter 4. The third and final methodological influence has been *I Swear I Saw This: Drawings in Fieldwork Notebooks, Namely My Own* (2011). In this text, anthropologist Michael Taussig uses one drawing of one event scribbled in one notebook to proliferate thought about a host of interrelated topics, within and beyond his usual anthropological frame. With a dreamy fluency, he moves between foci and theoretical friends to think reflexively about his position as an anthropologist, taker of notes, and human being, without self-absorption. This text has given me confidence in the use of (mostly) one choreographic work, namely my own, as a device for making new contributions to the field.

Just as I am influenced by the details of each writer's approach, I am using the three texts together to form a protective and energising forcefield which enables me to defend the location of my research within my own life, including my own life beyond the choreographic and curatorial actions which are the objects of this study. The manner of research I have taken is analogous to Rosemary Lee's inclusion of her wider circumstances and activities when thinking and talking about her practice. I think it is quite common for major life events to occur during PhD processes (many of my peers have married, had children, or moved cities or countries during their doctoral study). I too experienced such an event (though not one over which I had anything like control): the serious illness and then death of my mother. More than an influence, this completely reoriented my life and work, and had me engaging for the first time in both care and grief in profound ways for prolonged periods. These events demanded that I interrogate work and non-work in new ways, lived in ways other than read or danced or written or choreographed. This experience is inextricably woven through this research in all its forms.

1. On Work

10 January 2016

From: Gillie Kleiman

To: Participant-collaborators at Dance City

CC: Beckie Darlington

Dear everyone,

Thank you so much.

As lots of you know, I was super-nervous and really worried about how to look after everyone and remember how to make art at the same time. I had lots of goals for the week, more than I even realised, and so many of the questions have opened up with your help.

I forgot, in a way, how much performers are not just bodies but are minds and spirits and energies and all kinds of hokey things I can't get into without sounding totally loopy, but I'm genuinely touched by how much you all gave to the project. It was a delight to get to know you all better and to see you meet each other, or meet each other in new ways (sometimes extremely confusing ways, I know).

I'm a right rotten hippy at heart and I really did fall in love with you all. Gaaaaaaaah!

As you know I'm continuing with a whole new group of people next week in Nottingham, and then we'll see what happens after that, but you guys can always just meet up and care or sit like mermaids and sing or wrap each other in bondage tape or clamber into pyramids or rest, whenever you like.

BIG SPOONY HUGS

Gillie xxx

This email is a useful starting point for this chapter. I'm glad I saved it specially, copying it from Gmail into my log. The log is a document I have been keeping, a simple text file organised in reverse order, by which I mean that when I open it I write the day's date at the top and add from there, above what was written before. To look at it from the beginning means reading from the bottom in dated chunks; it's not easy to read, but it wasn't made to read. The log is one form of documentation of the process of making *Recreation*, a choreographic performance involving performers with different experiences of professional dance practice. The inclusion of this email represents the documentary nature of my research, the ethnographic determination with which I have collected materials and, hopefully, the basis of the account I would like to provide of the work and its interpretation. There are other traces that I have gathered: each day of rehearsal during this first period was broken into two three-hour sessions, and a rule for the structure of those rehearsals was that at least one photograph or video must be captured and saved. Alongside these mechanisms there was another self-imposed rule that each period of rehearsal should be concluded with a guided conversation, which was also recorded. The making process itself has been coloured and to some extent determined by its belonging in a practice-based research project, the two practices infecting one another and determining their futures. Sometimes there was the impression that they inhibited one another: I would want to pursue the content of a discussion further but we needed to get to the lunch break so that we could continue working in the afternoon; or, in an inverse situation, I would stop a run-through of one scenario or another to organise for a recorded conversation. Besides these mutual squeezings, the methods regularly failed: my terrible photography would result in a fuzzy mess of an image, the battery on a camera would run out during filming, or I would be too tired to write anything in the log.

Despite these mistakes, the evidence of the activity is available, on my computer and within my numerous backup systems. It's not only the errors, though, that make this documentation incomplete or illegible or awkward. Rather, it's not only the errors that make this documentation incomplete or illegible or awkward to anyone but me. Like the email, this material makes sense only to those with prior experience of the events, and as I was the only one present for all their capture, the materials altogether fully make sense only to me. I have the memories, real and imagined, insightful and pointless, which fill in the gaps and make a translation from fragments of digitally-stored data to, in this chapter, a plausible interpretation of the activity. This is a deliberate vantage point as much as a practical fact: my theorisation of my practice departs from my own experience thereof. Whilst it is shaped and influenced by the people with whom I shared the time, my position is autoethnographic, using the perspectives and provocations opinions of others to influence my own rather than seeking to represent theirs. This email invokes an audience of

invested others, but their presence is manifested through *my* written voice.

The email announces a temporality. You can see that the activity had begun but was not complete on 10 January 2016, it marking a mid-point in the process I would like to discuss in this chapter, the weekend between two weeks of studio-based research and development time. In these two weeks I worked with two different groups of people. The Newcastle participant-collaborators in the first week, the ones I address in this email, were mostly people drawn from my personal and professional networks in the city and its environs; in Nottingham, in the second week, the group was brought in through a call out in partnership with Dance4, the organisation hosting the residency, meaning that I mostly didn't know the people involved. To call either a group, in fact, is misleading—the work was structured so that there were between two and five participants in the room for any one session, with each participant joining for between two and five sessions. Many people in the 'group' didn't actually encounter one another at all. The disjuncture doesn't stop there: I would like to draw attention to the fact that I am writing quite some time after the activity took place, and, crucially, with a knowledge of some of its consequences, of aspects of its future. Naturally, this lag is filled with disadvantages (I am no longer as close to what happened, I don't remember it well, new interactions with the same people, for instance, colour older memories) and benefits (I had useful afterthoughts, I am differently attached, I can take something more of an outside view). I did not know, then, the theoretical apparatuses I would deploy in the work's interpretation, lending my reflections the uncomfortable power of hindsight.

The email is spilling over with my emotion. I write about nerves and worries, about care and being touched, about being delighted and falling in love. I offer virtual hugs and kisses in symbolic form. This is not what is meant by affective or emotional labour, the kind of labour most present in the attention of theorists over recent years. I don't understand this conceptualisation of this form of work to mean that the workers experience heightened emotions or are particularly encouraged to express feelings.[1] Rather, to follow Franco 'Bifo' Berardi, a philosopher and activist positioned centrally in the theorisation of contemporary labour, this form of work demands a range of affective, cognitive, and aesthetic capacities from each worker simply in order to participate in the flows of capital, to be able to work at all (2009). For the purposes of this chapter, this form of labour can be

1 Following the post-work discourse from which I begin to draw in this chapter and work with further in other chapters, I use 'work' and 'labour' interchangeably. I am aware of some of the ways in which these terms are pulled away from one another, in particular in Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958), and, though I do not consider this line of thinking unrelated to the ideas in this thesis, I found it would be unnecessarily digressive to include a full drawing out of the differences.

called post-Fordist, semiocapitalist, immaterial, affective, cognitive and more, each with their own inflections, lineages and conceptual priorities. What matters in this writing is that even in the corporeal world of dance and choreography, practices that (mostly, or often) prioritise the body and embodiment, contemporary forms of labour take hold, despite the fact that they can be conceptualised as somewhat disembodied. Whilst I would not suggest that my invocation of emotional states in the email is a symptom or even a worthwhile representation of affective labour, it does allude to the fact that the content of the choreographic process, in my individual efforts as well as in a shared sociality, involved something other than the body. Further, I can attest to the fact that this outburst of emotion was not matched by my behaviour in the studio: though I liked and cared about the experience of the participants, it is only in this email, in tapping keys on my laptop, in adopting the shared posture of semiocapitalism (Berardi 2009 and Campagna 2013) that my 'soul', as Berardi 'metaphorically and even a bit ironically' describes it, could be released (2009:22), resulting in a spilling-over of affect.

This chapter is concerned with a kind of spilling-over in another sense. Here I come to the question which started all the recorded conversations with the participants: 'was that work?'. In a legal sense it was certainly a form of work: there were letters of agreement between each participant and myself, describing what was to be undertaken and the remuneration offered. Of course that's not simple either, with the distinctions between employees, workers and contractors currently complicated in the UK in light of recent growth in self-employment and the practical and ethical fallout for individuals, businesses, and the state (Corlett and Tomlinson 2017). Because of the currently very mobile and active nature of concepts, policy, behaviour and publishing in this area, it is riddled with moving targets, terrifying and potent in equal measure, and I heed these continual movements. Through this legislative minefield, there are characteristics of contemporary labour that appear again and again in the literature on the subject. Mostly I draw from a European tradition of political philosophy, collecting, here, not the distinct nuances within the theory—a critical survey of the literature is not the purpose of this chapter—but the agreements around key terms. As such, the writers appear as supporting characters midst the action of the studio labours, an approach I take with caution but defend as a necessary method to foreground practice in this short writing. There are multiple common threads, of which I have chosen three: precarity, productivity and competition. In the body of this chapter, I will take these terms as categories, pressing the practice which is the subject of the writing into them. I am answering the question 'was that work?', here, in this limited way. In this, I will examine the extents to which and ways in which the research and development period satisfies the conceptual boxes the terms produce, and where it seems to expand them beyond mere illustration. In this I am seeking the overflow: not only

the stretching of terms but also the moments where the terms can no longer contain the lived experience.

In a large part the writers working with the theory of contemporary labour understand precarity and the emphasis on productivity and related characteristics to be negative or damaging, dangers to the lives of the workers and of humanity as a whole. Largely I share this position. This is more than exemplified in the following material. However, I also share with most of the writers an impulse to find flickers of optimism, not just *against* the manners of and features of labour in the West in the 21st century, but also *within* them. Like Weeks (2011), Gregg (2011), Cederström and Fleming (2012), and others, I will begin to suggest not an alternative way of doing things but a kind of additional one, another axis of potential action. From Berardi's concept of wealth, I will build a concept of care. I begin a gentle attention to the possibilities of care—which will find other appearances elsewhere in the thesis—here because the term arose concretely through the practice which is the subject dealt with in this chapter and it appears as the consequence of the reflections within it.

Precarity

There is a section of the work we are calling 'The Pyramids'. In this exercise, which is usually sandwiched between two other, choreographically related tasks, five or more participant-performers try to create cheerleading-style structures, with layers of bases, either on all fours in a table-top position or standing with strongly bent legs. Perhaps it's easier to imagine one version as a set of instructions:

Get on your hands and knees. Flex your feet so your toes provide traction. Make it so that your thigh bones are absolutely perpendicular to the floor. Make it so that your whole arm is straight, and absolutely perpendicular to the floor. Pull your navel to your spine and make your back absolutely parallel to the floor. Someone will join you, either directly at your side or at some other angle, but, either way, touching. Someone will climb onto you—a knee on a sacrum, a hand between shoulder blades. Don't move.

So far, so stable. There is a vision of a purpose, a mental image of how this should be. Everyone understands what should happen without exemplification. There's a simple task and it's achievable in the given time frame. Theatrically, it is deadening: the performers do it and it's done. This

exercise, though, has been set up to produce a choreographic reward more complex than the mere satisfaction of the shape; the idea is that the pyramid structure is never quite complete, so the sense of a continual action, a working-towards, is always present as the group traverses the space from downstage right to upstage left. I am looking in this section for a suspension of usefulness, a using-up of time. The goal of the pyramid shape is meaningful only inasmuch as it inspires activity, in something of the same way that some forms of labour are described as 'bullshit jobs' (Graeber 2018).

Precarity is present in multiple ways in both the process and choreographic content of this task. In his dystopic reflections on his own precarity, writer and precarious worker Ivor Southwood describes the state as 'a feeling of being kept in suspense' (2011:2), the exact aesthetic property I was seeking to produce in this nugget of choreography. *Non-Stop Inertia*, the title of Southwood's book, could be a sub-title for The Pyramids.

You don't have to go directly across the space. I mean, yes, go in that direction but you can come back on yourself. Make sure you're always useful. Look to hold the climbing person's hand, or offer yourself as base, clearly, with your whole body. But don't go too easily. Go sideways; find new angles.

The choreography hinders itself as much as it wants to progress. In doing so, it raises questions about the overall precarity of the choreographic project—the always-present sense that it might collapse at any moment—and the nature of the work being undertaken by all involved, mirroring precarities existing outside of this project, dance, research—belonging in the 'real' world of work.

I'll begin with the precarity of the project as a whole. The term 'project' itself suggests precarity, 'a processual, contingent and open practice, which cannot be controlled or planned and also entails the possibility of ending in a disaster,' (Kunst 2015:162). The possibility of ending in disaster dangles over this period of work; though the future performance *Recreation* had been promised to funders, venues and indeed the university in which this degree is being undertaken, in January 2016 I had no way of knowing whether or not I would succeed in making it happen, mostly for financial reasons. How The Pyramids is able to be realised is circumscribed by this layer of precarity; the interiority of the studio work is determined both by the sense that there is something to work on, for the future, and the instability of any individual component, including cast members.

One way in which this becomes visible is through the lack of preparation for this relatively

complicated and physical task. It quickly became clear that this activity involved a level of skill not necessarily present in every combination of participant-performers. It asked for a degree of basic strength and bodily awareness, enough experience with one's own physicality to know that shoulders stacked over straight arms provide the vector stable enough for someone to offer their body weight safely between the shoulder blades, and that bracing the shoulders wide and pressing into the hands goes further than bending arms and activating biceps. Not everyone knows this, and I didn't know *that* until I saw some of the extremely hazardous alignments of upper back and neck. This takes careful selection, and practice, neither of which were available to me and to the participants due to the composition of the situation, with its comings and goings of collaborators, some of whom I didn't know before they walked into the studio. Had I established a different structure than this kind of shift work, I might have taken the time to work with the performers through exercises to heighten sensitivity to alignment and build strength around the shoulders and core; it didn't seem worth it to invest this time of preparation when I didn't know if these performers in particular would return even that week let alone in later portions of the creation process. Reading this statement back, I see the ethical horror which I quite easily allowed myself to activate: because I wasn't sure what I or my product, my dance performance, would get out of taking time to develop the people with whom I was working, I allowed safety to be secondary. At the same time I have the sense that the reason I also chose not to do more work on this was because I didn't want to bother the participants with it. I was conscious that I wasn't offering much as the person asking them to work—not much money, not many hours work, not a sexy title or outcome to put on a CV—and I wanted them to have something of a good time, which meant not doing strenuous exercises repeatedly. The precarity of the situation shook apart the bond between 'employer' and worker, loosening the mutual investment and resulting in something of a surface engagement.[2]

In another version of events, I could have put more of my eggs in The Pyramids' basket and gone for the physical work each time. Imagining doing the same exercises at every session for the purpose of making The Pyramids more successful in terms perhaps limited only to safety, connects precarity to monotony not only in the sense of a continuous state of monotone anxiety but also in the repetition of previous activities, necessary because precarity seems to preclude the accumulation of skill or experience. This seems a contradiction: I think of the monotony of an office or a factory or even a ballet company, both somehow emblematic of a different time of non-precarious work, with the workers entering each day at the same time, going into the same spaces, making

2 I'm not an employer; I was not offering what UK law would call employment—instead, I was offering a contract to self-employed people. The term 'employer' is used in common parlance whatever the legal situation, so I will continue to use it here.

the same shapes with their bodies. This sort of working life is repetitious, but stable, seen in different directions: the archetypal factory worker is able to spend a lifetime doing the same physical actions because the market for their labour is stable, whereas the ballet dancer repeats their motions daily in order to produce a stability of body in performance. Precarity prescribes a different monotony, the monotony of always being a certain kind of beginner. A beginner's mind, most cherished in yoga for instance, implies an open curiosity, a quest for knowledge, humility. Under precarious conditions, this monotony of the beginner, then, is of always knowing that you will not know if you know what will happen that day, certainly a condition created in the development of *Recreation*. It's not an *option* to have a beginner's mind, in the way that it might be a mental state conjured by a yogi in order to facilitate forms of attention or interest; the precarious worker's mind is simply *forced* into the peculiar situation of never knowing what will be known. This is neither starting from scratch with either enthusiasm or fear, nor settling into something comfortable and familiar. It's a suspension between both, which, Southwood suggests, produces an uneasy state of living with too many and too few expectations (2011). A beginner's body is rather a different state of being altogether, and conjures for me, as the person responsible, concern and fear, a genuine worry about injury, about the precarity not only within my work or within the group but understood as the fallibility of a human body, marked through the unpreparedness which was the result of flexible work.

It's not that every one of my participant-collaborators was inexperienced in physical practices; many of them had dance training of one sort or another. It's that this was not reliable. Depending on the constitution of the group in that moment, I could be with experienced and athletic movers entirely, or those totally uncomfortable with even kneeling on the floor, or a combination across the spectrum. Mostly, those with more experience helped to explain safe practices, showing with their own bodies and correcting problems. A hierarchy appeared between those who knew and those who didn't, those who could and those who couldn't, those who were doing something like teaching and those who were doing something like learning. This was not because some had been in rehearsals with me more or had learned The Pyramids on a previous day, but because of external, previous experience. This indexes another aspect of precarity within contemporary labour, which effects both workers and production: the fact that when a precarious worker is not working, they should be preparing for or seeking work in their own time (Southwood 2011). Not only is non-work time 'haunted by the prospect of being called to do a shift' (Gregg 2011:154), but the worker should continue to develop their skills and capacities outside of work. The collaborators with whom I work had skills that were useful to me, but I had neither transparently sought nor contributed to developing. On the one hand this is to the benefit of the employer, or, in this case, the

choreographer: I did not need to prepare these performers for these tasks because their capacities were already there to deploy. This would be the case in any situation of employment or indeed choreography, but the mixed cast, comprised of collaborators of different relations to professional dance, foregrounded this external knowledge despite my attempts at finding equilibrium. This produced an ethical awkwardness: I was trying to make a convivial rehearsal context wherein different sorts of experiences could be valued and at the same time investigate certain formal possibilities that can be better realised by some participants than others: in fact, every single proposal, not only The Pyramids, offered this same tension.[3] The many guilts of being an employer of any kind, the person who pays as well as the person who facilitates, were extended along this line: everyone was paid the same sum (£40) for the same amount of time (3 hours), but such examples demonstrate that time does not ever equal money, for some participant-collaborators were drawing on years of practical experience whilst others seemed to be the recipients of training through the rehearsal. Still, it would be a mistake to assume that just because a worker has prior knowledge which could contribute to the work, they must offer it. I do not remember asking anyone to do anything because they already knew how to do it, neither did I delegate my responsibility of describing or demonstrating or instructing to anyone else in this research and development period, even if it was clear they could do it. It simply happened that those who could generously and gently put their experience into the room, supporting the others. They seemed to offer it quite naturally:

Yep, that's it. Hang on a second, straighten your arms? You might find it easier with flat hands, I know it sounds like it wouldn't be right...yes! And you can lean into me. Perfect.

This sits in contrast to the dominant understanding of the forms of sociality available within precarious labour. Precarity theorists argue that 'precarious jobs actively prevent the quality of time necessary to maintain personal and social relationships' (Gregg 2011: 154). It's true that, because of the structure of the rehearsals, few of the collaborators met on multiple occasions in the studios. In the case of The Pyramids, at least, this did not seem to matter: it was not the same person doing the same thing or being in the same place that produced connection or collegiality. Rather, I would like to suggest that it was the very sense of contingency and insecurity that is at the heart of precarity that required each performer to go beyond an execution of material in order to make the choreography possible, which enabled some other kind of relation to manifest. Because the material is physically precarious, the collaborators had to enter into a relationship of mutual support.

3 This tension is common within community, participatory and intergenerational dance activity; its nature and consequences is discussed further in Chapter 4.

The Pyramids does not allow for an understanding of these labours as depersonalised, as the mere filling in of packets of time paid for by an employer (Berardi 2009). The Pyramids introduces precarity as bodily, personal, with weak shoulders and a sweaty back, or with inconveniently long hair and slippy leggings. The fluctuations of personnel under this enforced corporeal precarity can be understood as enhancing rather than limiting the bonds between individual participants, charging the uncertainty with a trust that *someone* will be there to take the weight. The insecurity of the physical situation squeezes out the fleeting, inconsistent social bonds in favour of invested, caring physical ones, which in turn appear to bring everyone closer. It's not necessary to know a person's name or where they live if you're about to stand on them, but you'll become mighty familiar with their shoulder girdle.

There was a tipping point in The Pyramids in which I understood that to get the choreography to be both safe and satisfying I needed to work with a particular group. Even though I was trying to relax, constantly reminding myself that this was a situation of research, a place of finding out rather than fabrication, I needed greater investment from collaborators to develop choreographic structures, investment in terms of time which they were not invited to offer. I'd placed myself in the inverse of what Melissa Gregg describes as '[t]he bind of today's white-collar professional' wherein the worker 'is to be invested in work as and when required but without the reciprocal assurance from employers that commitment will be rewarded' (2011: 165). I was to be attentive and responsive to the collaborators whatever the situation, prepared for the day and ready with clear proposals in each session and a continuity through the week, whereas the others in the room could dip in for three hours and never come back. This difficulty is perhaps the case for any kind of employer, but the role of choreographer in contemporary dance with non-professional performers is particularly coloured with the facilitative, and this facilitative function appears to enhance the inversion. Unlike the work contexts Gregg researches, the *Recreation* research and development is an example of how choreographic practice might flip such directions of dependability, creating frictions with orthodoxies despite the appearance of similar working structures.

For The Pyramids, I needed the collaborators, or rather particular collaborators, to be with me more, do more work, so that we could progress in developing the performance without having to reintroduce structures or material repeatedly. Where the performers were at the beginning 'dispensable', the physical, cognitive and affective experiences produced through earlier labours literally walked out of the studio with the participant-performers each day and the process was rendered inefficient. I wanted to be able to say:

Go back to the place we were yesterday. Yep, do it again. Can we try that way where you turn around again? I think I know how we can do it now. So yeah, Amanda kneel and yeah, if Kit, if you stand next to her.

There was a quick fix: I had chosen five people to come for the whole of the last day of the first week and they became the performers of this section. The roles settled. Small, athletic, young, dance-trained Viki was the natural pinnacle of the pyramid; she can clamber on and be carried by almost anyone else in almost any way without any harm. There was a certain predictable pleasure in watching this happen, but Viki was uncomfortable and she told me so. Whilst the other four performers continued with the wrangling and negotiating characteristic of the task, and independent of the composition of the team, Viki floated above them. The base collaborators were still engaged in creating and resolving precarity: they did not know where another one would kneel or stand, they had to communicate actively to identify who would take a foot or be ready to have a hand placed on their head. They are engaged in what Berardi would call the '[p]recariousness of the collective perception,' 'the anguish of failing to find each other, while endlessly, fanatically meeting each other along the paths of connection' (Berardi in Campagna 2013:4). They are engaged in an interpersonal physical task which could be seen as dependent on a collective understanding of the continued production and near-resolution of a physical precarity. They are stimulated by the near-success—the *just* failing—that the task prescribes, and, in so doing, are meeting each other within, through, and beyond the instabilities they share. Viki is not participant in this. In a way, she has shifted position from precarious worker to stable boss: she knows what her role is and that role includes directing others:

Hannah just stand there. No, I don't think I can go there. Can someone take my hand? Right, I'm going to put my leg on your shoulder; are you ready?

Berardi's description of precarity's sociality is, of course, something of a lament. Reading the statement against this situation, though, offers a new angle. Where there might be 'anguish,' or at least difficulty in this choreographic situation, the collaborators are indeed finding each other, or at the very least seeking one another. It is not the depersonalisation of the precarious worker but a deep and felt repersonalisation. The 'fanaticism' returns as motivation to connect, to find one another and meet—physically—in order to make something happen. I want to suggest that this choreographic situation exposes the fact that the discomfort lies not in the precarity itself but in the relationship between stability and precarity. When everyone's role is constantly shifting there is no problem even with failure: there is a suppleness that always already expects that it won't quite

work, that there will be frustration and hindrance and even hazard. When stability—such as Viki's stable role—is inserted, the relation shifts, an expectation of expediency enters and the relations lose their primacy in favour of meeting a goal, here the goal of a sort of virtuosic supported flight of a woman from one place to another. Outside of this stability, precarity is filled with an anxious lack, but in that absence new relations grow.

Productivity

There is a contradiction at the heart of contemporary labour around productivity, discussed by, amongst others, philosopher Federico Campagna in *The Last Night* (2013). On one hand, productivity is no longer measurable in human terms. Referring particularly to the current state of productive activity as enveloped in ever-increasing automation—and I always think most readily of self-service checkouts at supermarkets—Campagna describes the way in which expectations of productivity are so machine-like that they become meaningless. The will to productivity is in relation to an inhuman and possibly inhumane goal, the psychological effect being that the humans ourselves are viewed as second-rate, never able to meet those machinic standards, making the efforts unabashedly pointless. On the other hand, it is through a person's working situation and their level of productivity that they come to have worth 'not only in front of their peers, but also in front of themselves' (2013:12). Work and its outcomes are transformed into worth within the 'intimate theatre of happiness' according to Campagna (2013:12), a curious invocation of a performance setting which aligns with Nick Srnicek's and Alex Williams' assertion that workers 'put on performances of productivity' (2015: 125). Humans *can't* meet the unknowable, unattainable measures of productivity and at the same time *must* be productive for personal and social satisfaction, resolving the disjuncture through performance. In this section I'd like to think about these statements in reference to another choreographic proposal developed during the weeks of research and development for *Recreation* in 2016.

The terms 'research' and 'development' are not mere hangers-on in this thinking. Research implies finding, discovering and working out. Development, on the other hand, includes in it a propulsion forwards, decisions made, some things rejected and some things advanced. The former seems to understand that it is worth it to be there, the latter suggests that it is worth it to be there as long as something useful, productive, comes out. This was reflected in the practice itself.

As discussed above, when The Pyramids too neatly satisfied a commonly understood measure of productivity—making a nice sturdy tower—there seemed to be no point in continuing with it. As soon as an efficiency landed, as soon as there was a way to measure the success of an outcome, to produce something solid, or as solid as a fragment of performance can be, it was clear that an end had been met and it could not be used as a means for further development. In these instances, what gathered the mark of productivity was that which could indeed act as the seed for future growth; any 'product' that could not be the basis of more work lost its value. In this I hear a haunting of today's politicians from every political corner calling for job creation, the ultimate invocation of work without real social necessity, effort summoned just to make the context for more effort.

The landscape is more complex than this rhetoric. Those thinking more carefully observe that contemporary labour is characterised by the 'disjunction between Work [*sic*] and economic production' and the fact that 'products and services constitute Work's most spectacular outcome, but in the present day they can hardly be considered as its core production' (Campagna 2013:11), whilst at the same time '[w]e need to have a sense of necessity and purpose in our work; to find this, we should produce useful products' (Mies 1986:217). The efforts my collaborators and I were making to make things that lasted, had borders and edges of comprehensibility dramaturgically or visually, always appeared as eventual failures, for work today insists that productivity is a visible action in time—the performance of work—rather than a commodity. We must keep working to feel productive—in fact, this is the very meaning of working at all (Campagna 2013).

This requires illustration.

In the rehearsals, the participant-collaborators and I often worked with scores, sets of instructions for improvised scenarios. Each slight variation in a score would be lettered (Score A, Score B etc.), and I would write down their contents in my log. Score A's list is

building, gardening, singing, videos

A station was set up in the space for each of these activities, with a bunch of working materials for building and gardening offstage, a selection including plants, a lamp, yoga blocks and mats, books, stationery materials, magnets, a mirror, rolls and rolls of tape and other miscellany. Building was downstage centre-right; gardening was in a strip upstage, a microphone on a stand for singing was upstage left; and a technical box with a laptop on it, facing downstage, was set up in

the remaining space with a selection of videos from the internet available to screen. The levels of detail in the instruction were variable, the collaborators invited to find a way of working with each one. With each there was a sense of making something, bringing something into being: building produced a built thing, gardening a 'garden', singing a recognisable song, and the videos might well have been better titled 'dancing', as each of the videos depicted some kind of movement and the rule was to copy it as closely as possible, making a dance its product. On the surface, each of these actions has a very concrete end. However, each activity was ever-so-slightly shifted so that it couldn't ever meet its aim: the song had to be sung in a karaoke style, explored earlier in the day, disrupting the possibility of it being well-performed in a recognisable way; because the laptop faced downstage the dancer would have to face upstage, ruining the frontality of a nicely-presented dance; building and gardening both lacked the proper materials for their productions. There were perceptible potential outcomes, but the details of the choreography prevented their realisation, materialising the activity or effort of production rather than products.

The purposefulness was relational as well as individual. In one version of Score A the collaborators started at one station, moving to another one-by-one until the group re-formed, then drip-feeding themselves on to the next and so on. Though this offered a comforting recurring collegiality, a new product arose called 'group', the structure disbanding and recreating a new version of this product over and over. In another, each performer worked a while at one station independently before moving to another, each activity activated by a different number of people. Gardening, for example, could look like two in a space on the stage, one drawing lines with tape whilst the other picked up and replaced magnets in a pattern on the floor. There was no specific relationship performed beyond gentle undetermined conviviality, no sense that this was static or personal. No social product was produced, no identity solidified between actor and activity or between actors.

In this way Score A might be seen as an activation of Marx's famous lines, appearing in several of the texts forming the background for this chapter, in which a fictitious future worker might

> ...hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening,
> criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind without ever becoming
> hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic...
>
> Marx and Engels 1970: 53

My collaborators garden for five minutes, dance for seven, sing a song for 90 seconds and then go back to gardening, without ever becoming a gardener, a dancer or a singer. Though each of

the activities in the score was infused with a potential product, the action itself could continue ad infinitum: there was no natural end. Marx's worker might 'fish in the afternoon' but there is no description of how long this afternoon might be, whether the fishing would be one solid block or several attempts, if a certain number of fish were required for that evening's dinner or any other measure of fulfilment. There is a breeziness to this, and there was a breeziness to Score A. The performers pottered from this to that, following instructions and following their noses, feeling out what they might like to do next or if they'd like to stay doing what they were doing. They were doing for the sake of doing. In the thinking of Campagna and others, this is somewhat terrifying: workers mindlessly yet religiously jabbing at keyboards for the sake of doing something that seems productive even if there's no way of knowing whether there is anything socially useful being created (2013). Contemporary work, writes Campagna, is 'striking for its unproductiveness and absurdity' (2013:12). I can see how Score A might exemplify this waste of human powers. I would prefer to follow Kathi Weeks to William Morris when she writes that there is pleasure for all living things in the exercise of energies (2011). Score A was an opportunity for my collaborators to exercise their energies. This doesn't mean hanging out, doing 'whatever', or even an open improvisation. Their energies were guided towards a particular direction, even if that direction was open, vague or absurd. There were challenges in the material: building a sculpture or structure out of the limited materials required intention and ingenuity, and the dance material on the videos demanded careful attention not to mention physical skill in its mimesis. And yet there was a palpable softness to the situation which relates more readily to Morris' pleasure, to an aesthetic, sensible, working-through of the actions, than to the frantic, anxious, empty quality of the contemporary worker as described by Campagna and Berardi. I would like to figure Score A as the kind of reorganisation and redistribution of the productive for which Weeks calls *because* it holds in it the tension between the seemingly-productive activity and the unproductive outcome, not despite of it.

Just as the participant-collaborators did not become builders because they were building, it seems to me that they did not become performers because they were engaged in the task of performing. When conjuring Score A in my imagination, we are at Dance City in the first week of research. We are in the theatre. This theatre was specially-designed for the needs of touring dance performances, and has a particularly large playing space in relation to its 254 seats. In all other respects it is quite a typical black box, with a bank of seating raking down to meet the stage. I am sitting in maybe row F or row G, six or seven rows back from the stage. There are five performers to watch, each with a different personal history of being on stage, including very little experience whatsoever. I watch as the performers repeat this score over and over, with brief chats and slight reforming of instruction in between each go. My attention homes in on Erin, probably the least

experienced and least comfortable performer. She is gardening. She seems to me to be absolutely absorbed in creating a pattern with objects on the floor, making a neat border, a bed of flowers and plants. She doesn't mime gardening actions—there's no hoeing or digging or dusting-off of muddy knees—but in the frame of the action I am convinced she is gardening. This absorption is characteristic of the score at large. Despite the busy-ness of the space—though there are only four activities and five performers the stage feels full—concentration abounds. Sure, there's an ease in moving from one thing to the next but things are taken seriously. I have the sense that I've been forgotten about. Where this space, the theatre at Dance City, perhaps like any theatre, can bring forth the force of an audience through the powers of architecture and memory, I have the sense that I needn't be there, that the idea of an audience has disappeared. Where Melissa Gregg argues that in contemporary work it is not a boss but the teammates who are the supervisors of each worker's efforts (2011), I have the impression that it's not only me who is forgotten but the very nature of the work at hand, that is, the creation of a performance, including the context in this situation of performing as a group. Suspended between the presence of productivity and the absence of a product, inhabiting their (temporary, directed) interest, the performers have stopped performing. Performance in this situation is not an individualist show, showing, or showing off, but a sort of excuse. 'Performance' or even 'performing' is not a state being developed to bridge the gap between the paradox I described at the beginning of this section; in this choreographic proposal 'performing' is a frame which allows working to shift to new shapes. Where Srnicek and Williams invite performing into their theory as a shared but ultimately individually-felt neurotic necessity in contemporary work, Score A uses the pretence of a performance to drop away the sense of working towards something. It is telling that Score A did not become part of *Recreation*; it fell away in the first week of the creation period after the research and development weeks. It seemed to serve itself better than it might serve an audience; many of the collaborators commented on how much they enjoyed doing it, but it never seemed to 'work', in that other meaning of having aesthetic resonance understood at least firstly through the intuition of the director. Its theatrical solidity never realised, it was put to one side as one of those actions of choreographic research that belongs only there.

My optimism on the potentialities held within the research and development weeks of *Recreation* is calming. Looking at the notes from the time, though, brings forth abdominal tension, slight throaty nausea, and an overall fear that nothing's getting done: a personal crisis of productivity. Despite the theoretical backdrop and utopian disposition, I was scared that I wouldn't have anything to show for my time. Where here, as I write, I use wordcounts as measures, in the period of studio work time, indeed, became the framework for understanding productivity, or, more

accurately, for quelling this anxiety. My tactic for doing so was to break the research into ever more manageable chunks—a fortnight into weeks, weeks into days, days into sessions, sessions into sections, sections into timed scores. According to Berardi, this is characteristic of contemporary life, where '[l]iving time is subjected to work through a fractal dispersion of both consciousness and experience, reducing the coherence of lived time to fragments' (2009:132). Berardi sees this as a psychologically and socially damaging quality of contemporary labour; I am conditioned by this form of labour—it's what I know—and, contrarily, see it is a comfort. At the time, I was not aware that I was doing this, merely concerned that I did not know what I was doing and needed some way to organise the practice that was to take place each day. This became a dominating emblem of the studio, as I would offer some instruction or set up a score, then 'waste time' apologetically hunting among everyone's belongings for my phone or iPad so I could set a timer.

Score A was always timed. If memory serves me correctly, the smallest fragment of time it occupied was 12 minutes; later, it became the centrepiece of a larger score lasting an hour. My only job was to watch and not tinker with the timer. This was not always an easy task. Other measures of success, of a kind of productivity, would drift past me—perhaps I would understand that someone had misheard a rule and I'd want to correct the error, maybe something like building their structure in the spot where the microphone was supposed to be, or doing something explicitly together with someone instead of occupying the same space and choreography, or I'd realise that my assumptions about how the set-up should be were faulty from the outset. I had to practice submitting to time, and it became easier to see that the value—emerging in different ways at different moments—would be produced through letting time be. This practice allowed me to drop whatever criterion I had been inadvertently using to assess the situation and once again allow time to pass.

Berardi reminds that 'the relation between time and quantity of produced value is difficult to determine, since for a cognitive worker every hour is not the same from the standpoint of produced value' (2009:75). This statement is true of the practice discussed here, despite its corporeal condition. Connecting this to contemporary work's method of fragmenting time, creating a frightening incoherence of experience, it is easy to see why this is problematic. My solution to my own sense of unproductiveness along with the will to produce was to deploy this tactic of fragmentation and could have quite easily amplified the neurosis, as I found that fragments of time no more prescribed productivity. However, though it was not always straightforward, the sense was more of creating temporal structures to fill, enabling the truth that it has no determinable quantity of produced value to be an opportunity. Once the length of time for any particular activity had been agreed, any kind of productivity other than 'fill this time' became inconsequential or additional or

an interesting quirk. This meant that the activities within the scores had to hold a balance between challenging—it had to be somewhat difficult to fill the time, even if it was difficult because of boredom—so that there was some sense of achieving something, and at the same time easy enough to keep going. Over the period of research the timed scores became longer and longer. It became a practice to be able to keep going, and the choreographic decisions became increasingly guided by finding sets of instructions that could allow time to stretch. In this way, my collaborators and I were liberated from any other kind of meter, and passing the time became enough. This could be an instance of productivity for productivity's sake, where work is a mere holding ground for the performance of productivity, where 'performance' is understood as a dangerous fakery. Workers put on performances of productivity, sure, but that doesn't mean any one thing. Performance, or at least Score A, stretches productivity until it is thin until it is weakened until it gets holes until it is not a compression band but fishnets and then it breathes. The activity is still contained by something called productivity, still captured in productivity as a value, but this value is loose, sensual, tearable.

Competition

There's a person who took part in the process here discussed whose description will seem unflattering. I have considered omitting the thinking I have done about their participation, but it is so helpful in thinking about aspects of contemporary work and their impacts that I am choosing to retain this writing, with some changes. I will not disclose where they participated, or their gender, and I will use the pronouns they/them to describe them. I name them C, which is not their initial in real life. Some of the other details about C cannot be disguised because they are essential to the analysis.

I don't know what C does, most days. Over the past few years I have heard from them, through others and through social media that they have been odd-jobbing: a cafe here, some administrative work there, a bit of performing when it suits. C is a trained performer and, for several years, had a permanent, full-time role as a performer in a company. Outside of work or work-like activities, I know that C has a dependent and has caring duties.

I get the impression that C is relishing the experience of taking part in the *Recreation* research. They are enthusiastic and cheery, making jokes, and generally making the environment seem buoyant. They see themselves as a professional performer; I don't have any reason to consider

them otherwise. To my perception, though, there is a performance of what it means to be a performer happening, an over-assertion, a playing-up. On the one hand, C's work identity *is* their identity: working is the favourite part of their life and the main one through which they experience themselves as vital, creative, whole. Weeks (2011), Berardi (2009) and Srnicek and Williams (2015) flag this as typical of the contemporary worker in neoliberal capitalism. On the other, it seems that this playing up of being 'a performer' indicates a gap between C's ordinary personhood and their operation in this environment.

I watch C in a long-form improvisation, similar to Score A, discussed above. In this score there are fewer things on stage but more performers. The performers have available to them several different ways of being on the stage, moving, standing, or sitting like mermaids, and they are to move between silence, singing quietly, or singing loudly, either into a microphone or unamplified. There are rules about the use of the space. There is the option to robe oneself with some gold fabric for the purposes of hiding in plain (and shiny) sight. The score has been set up to think about different interactions between the leisurely and the presentational. While the others move hesitantly around, shy to puncture a gentle space with loud sound, C doesn't care, or doesn't realise, or wants to do it enough, or thinks it should be done so does it. I don't know the motivation, but I can see that C hogs the microphone, singing as if in an X Factor audition, masking poorly their pleasure in being on stage and singing well according to normative ideas of good singing with an edge of irony, a cheeky expression.

C seems to be staking their ground, making sure they are seen as a professional, hinting at previous experience and making it clear they know how rehearsals work. It's not necessary, and it grates—not because it alienates less experienced collaborators but because the environment doesn't require it and so it glimmers with a sense of desperation. The environment seems to reject it. I can't blame C; I get the sense that they are emphasising the professional nature of the context and their participation within it for precisely the psychosocial reasons that epitomise contemporary labour. C is using their skills and relaying their experience as a professional because to identify themselves as a worker ensures that their activity *is* work, in the context of a project in which the activity therein is slippery and dubious when it comes to its status as work and the participants as workers. As Weeks describes, '[w]ork is often understood and experienced as a field of individual agency and as a sign of and a path to self-reliance' (2011:51). Work is an 'ultimate good' (Srnicek and Williams 2015: 124), around which our 'inner lives' and 'social world' are organised (130). C is one of the 'significant number of people for whom paid employment is the most compelling demonstration of virtue, accomplishment, and self-identity that society makes available'

(Gregg 2011:xi). Why wouldn't C want to be seen as a professional in this process in which some people are and some people aren't, and where the kinds of value being produced are somewhat ungraspable? As Srnicek and Williams are clear to outline, this has nothing to do with the political inclinations of the individual, or their intellectual engagement with such questions; the effects of the neoliberal environment are strong enough to drive anyone into the kind of work-centred identity construction C was performing (2011). Going further, Berardi proposes that '[n]o desire, no vitality seems to exist anymore outside the economic enterprise, outside productive labor and business. Capital was able to renew its psychic, ideological and economic energy specifically thanks to the absorption of creativity, desire, and individualistic, libertarian drives for self-realization' (2009:79). It's no wonder that C got sucked in, and that that was spat out in their contribution to the rehearsals.

What is more curious, then, is why this manner of being appeared as an anomaly midst the 27 collaborators across two cities. Mostly, we found ourselves in a convivial situation. Apart from me, leading the project, it was rare that one collaborator stood out in particular (The Pyramids, discussed above, is an exception). The forms that I chose to propose to the participants always involved everybody in the room apart from me, usually in the form of a game, exercise or score with a set of rules which were often the same for all performers. This might suggest a coolness or even an individualism within the structures, but because the activities often invited a physical or interpersonal intimacy, this potential did not appear to be activated. This intimacy was multiple: we did long, group cuddling scores, partner or group actions involving touch, and discussions on personal matters. These carried with them no motive past themselves: I was interested in the theatrical and, yes, affective potentials of these suggestions but I couldn't or didn't predict their effects and proposed them as open-ended. There was nowhere to go with any intimacy that might have been developed.

I'll offer a more elaborated example. At various points in the research I proposed an exercise in which a collaborator would adopt a posture which, by itself, could be read neutrally, or at least be ambiguous or multiple in its potential referents or lack thereof. I have the image in mind of a performer taking a shape on hands and knees, a pose that might be equally created by a person looking for something on the floor, doing Pilates or yoga exercises, playing an animal in a children's game, or aiming to produce rectangular geometries with their body. The next person would come and make another shape near to but not touching the initiator which, again, would be ambiguous in itself but, together, would allude to some kind of sexual act. At first these were very straightforward, with hands, faces and groins coming close to one another in what seemed like a finite variety

of combinations and physical postures. As the exercise went on, either with a constantly changing stream of pairs, or as a cascading line travelling across the space in a leapfrog structure, a greater repertoire developed, with unusual and puzzling compositions realising themselves, and then fading away.

This flow of people, positions, and combinations is analogous to the flow of people, positions and combinations of the overall research and development period. Though some of the collaborators knew each other—especially in Newcastle, where they were invited through my personal networks rather than any other kind of mechanism—they never all met one another in one place in one time. I made very little effort to catch collaborators up with events of previous days; it seemed as pointless as the much-hated CCing culture of contemporary offices. Instead, I offered as much information as seemed necessary for the activities at hand, encouraging or allowing others to pitch in when it seemed they wanted to. Nobody could gather an overview and understand the constituent parts of this collaboration so any one person's comprehension of themselves within the 'team' was partial at best. In fact, calling the ever-changing mixture of people gathering around this project a team is a stretch. 'Team' suggests a stable group of individuals who work together towards something concrete: a set of goals, maybe even a 'win'. To be a team, it requires drive towards something, perhaps, ultimately, a scaled-up version of Campagna's idea of the aim of all workers under capitalism, 'Success in our Career' (2013:18). In a team, 'all colleagues work together, sharing responsibility for the organization' (Gregg 2011:74). Such a constellation of workers indeed involves certain intimacies: the pleasure of the ongoing relationships present in regular work—something I don't often experience myself, working independently—as well as the reciprocal 'bearing witness' to one another's professional efforts (Gregg 2011:74). This bearing witness produces a 'mythically egalitarian playing field', a coercive environment in which simulates a form of democracy whilst invariably acting as the 'omnipotent surveillance' of each workers' endeavours (Gregg 2011:74).

Thinking this conception of team through the parallel structures of the sex positions game and the organisation of the research and development period offers some interest. Unlike the form of group Gregg critiques, the studio environment always included a boss: me. Though not panoptical, my presence as both initiator and audience meant that the participants themselves were freed from the responsibility of reflecting on one another's contributions. There was no opportunity for the internally constituted coercion described by Gregg to appear, for the participants were not collectively responsible: I was. Moreover, the participants couldn't ever see each other fully: there were glimpses, traces, hauntings, but not a way to assess, a way to compete squarely. Being a team is how collaboration turns into competition, working together the context within which

individuals can compete (for attention, for promotion, for resources). The lack of teamness gave way to something that gets close to Campagna's 'union of egoists', in which each collaborator is individually engaged in a collaborative, rather than collective, act (2013:70). There were bonds but not indelible ones, each one of Campagna's 'adventurers' following their own line of action (2013:70), finding their way into following a similar path, supportive but for themselves, neither competing individually or as a team. Berardi puts forward another form of group organisation, a 'swarm'. He defines this as 'a particular kind of collectivity or group phenomenon that may be dependent upon a condition of connectivity. A swarm is a collectivity that is defined by relationality...The swarm has no political soul, only an automatic and relational soul...The swarm now tends to become the dominant form of human action' (2009:195). I think Gregg's team and Berardi's swarm share something of the coercive vacuity the union of egoists contends, but I think swarm, as a metaphor, need not always be an animation of a zombified mass empty of soul, lacking 'attentiveness, the ability to address, care for and appeal to others' (Smith in Berardi 2009:10). Instead, I'd like to imagine a swarm in terms of a murmuration, a natural swarm of birds. The form is what holds the relations, and the relations are true, for that time and space. A murmuration is not a competitive space but a breezily collaborative one, each element valued but not needed.

I don't want to be too romantic; I want to be wary of washing away forms of competition that did make themselves visible. There are two instances where competition, as a form of relation, stood out. I'll describe each briefly, in order to think about how different manifestations of competition reflect on to the extent to which these two weeks of rehearsal were work.

At Dance4 in Nottingham the participants for the research week were drawn mostly from an open call, managed by the organisation. Competition suddenly appeared, as, surprisingly, many more people expressed an interest than we could have accommodated, in terms of money, as all participants were paid; time, for we were aiming to have repeat visits from all collaborators; and administration, as each person needed to be scheduled and contracted and paid separately. Some of the applicants had written an expression of interest that was a few sentences long, said something about themselves, and appeared not to know anything about the project or about my other work. These were mostly local people who did not work in dance. Others wrote long letters describing why they wanted to take part, in particular in this project, in particular with me, and were willing to travel long distances or find places to stay in Nottingham in order to participate. These were mostly people with dance or performance training within five years of graduating from an undergraduate course. One group understood it as a recreational activity which required certain attributes which they would or wouldn't have and they simply needed to inform me, and the other a

professional opportunity which demanded a case being made for their selection; this latter group had firmly placed this activity in the context 'work'. An open call is a mechanism that belongs firmly within competition, whether or not it explicitly relates to labour, paid or unpaid. Competition itself is not necessarily associated with work: both Berardi and Campagna explain that it is one of the main conditions of contemporary life, unavoidable and dramatic in its power (Berardi 2009; Campagna 2011). It is the responses to the competitive frame, rather than the frame itself, which demonstrate the fact that the project and its call were ambiguous or even entirely dual, operating as both work and not-work dependent on the individual's relationship to and understanding of the situation. This dual nature did not seem to have a negative effect on the resulting collection of participants—most of whom did not know one another—and the theme of competition did not arise again.

In Newcastle, however, a different set of circumstances made competition appear in another form. In this city, where I live, the collaborators were invited to participate; my networks in Newcastle are quite broad, facilitating a range of participants from different parts of life. Despite this breadth, Newcastle is a small city and many of the collaborators knew one another, some very well indeed. In my efforts towards transparency, I made it known that I was seeking to find a small core cast for the final work, and that this cast would likely be based in Newcastle, for the sake of logistics and cost, for the sake of efficiency, to make the final work competitively priced in a market. Unthinkingly I added to all the different sorts of textures in the space an additional one: the audition. I suppose I always assume honesty is the most ethical policy: an error. Most participants said nothing—perhaps they knew they wouldn't have wanted to do it for longer anyway, or feel so far away from the idea of performing in a 'professional' production that they wouldn't think I would ever ask them—but there is, I sense, a charge. One participant exposed it explicitly with exasperation, voicing her discomfort and imagining that she would be never be favoured above C, described above. C's behaviour could be seen as exemplifying some ways of being common or even preferred in audition scenarios: vocal, performing presence, taking the starring roles. This engendered a loss of solidarity, a loss of conviviality, between me and the collaborators and the collaborators with one another. When this arose, we understood each 'other according to rules of competition' (Berardi 2009:80). We saw each other as 'danger, impoverishment and limitation, rather than experience, pleasure and enrichment' (Berardi 2009:80). I don't think this undid the intimate, collaborative, murmuring union we had produced, but it certainly tarnished it.

Care

Each of the writers to whom I refer try to offer something of a solution or response to the dangers or predicaments of contemporary labour. These vary in elaboration as well as form, from Federico Campagna's call for parasitism as a tactic to defend against the worst of labour whilst living within it, to Carl Cederström and Peter Fleming's invocation of the figure of the little girl as a deworking of the human body, to Nick Srnicek's and Alex Williams' more practical directives for a post-work future. Franco Berardi suggests another, starting from a reconceptualization of wealth. Wealth, Berardi describes, is understood as quantity of resources gathered by a person or group, the cumulative possession of money and property. Throughout *The Soul at Work* (2009), he posits this as a refrain, indicating, perhaps, the recurrent quality of this idea in contemporary thinking, the sense that this construction is absorbed into the collective psyche as permanent truth rather than selected belief until brought under question. Each time Berardi points this out, he posits his alternative: a reapprehension of the term, a reclamation of 'wealth as the simple capacity to enjoy the world available in terms of time, concentration and freedom' (81). Wealth can be refigured, Berardi claims, by nourishing the soul, those forces of 'mind, language and creativity' that have become the agents of work and whose activities have been co-opted to the benefit of capital (21). He claims that the economic disjunctures inherent in contemporary life cannot be solved by new economic conceptualisations. Instead, he offers a sidestep, suggesting that to rethink wealth in terms of sensual pleasure, rather than the pleasure of possessing, would offer a new way of being rich which would gradually surface as a new economic and social reality.

He offers a method for realising this form of wealth. Berardi suggests that '[i]n the days to come, politics and therapy will be one and the same' (220). The action that is required from those of us who wish to pursue it is to create therapeutic contexts, not in order to overthrow capitalism and its consequences for work but to heal the traumas through 'social zones of human resistance, zones of therapeutic contagion' (220). Crucially, Berardi does not believe that a total revolution resulting in a new economic future is really possible, but that capitalism as it is today will become one of multiple possible methods for organising society and its resources. The process for achieving this new state is therapy. Though there are multiple therapeutic methods in contemporary use, including somatic approaches, Berardi writes about psycho- and schizoanalysis; this, it seems, is a direct match for the capacities of the soul, the cognitive and psychical energies that are subsumed by capital within contemporary work. For me there is a gap, a bridge that the form of therapy Berardi outlines cannot make between the capacities of the soul and the bodily, sensual, aesthetic version of wealth that Berardi is trying to reach. Berardi describes a form of therapy which involves an

engagement mostly through language that does not fully harness the sensible. I'd like to make a twist and turn therapy into care. Care is always already bodily, as I see it. The feeling of care produces a desire for the physical; I think of the urge to put an arm around someone if they're upset, or the cautions given to schoolteachers to attempt to circumvent the urge to comfort children with the physical gestures of care. By the same token, the physical gestures of care cannot be fruitfully undertaken without the feeling 'care': why would you carefully—laboriously—mask the edges of a wall to carefully paint another unless there was some will to care, some concern for the pleasures and wellbeing of yourself or another?

Though not whatsoever fixed, there is a firm distinction between therapist and client, a hierarchical relationship where one needs the other more in one direction; though at our final session yesterday, my therapist expressed a satisfied sadness that our relationship was ending for now, she still rightfully accepted the payment for her work, work which I required for my wellbeing. Though care can also be understood in these terms—otherwise we wouldn't have the word 'carer'—I would suggest that all people are engaged in care as *both* carer and 'cared-for', a term used by care scholar Nel Noddings (2013), at different points in their lives. Beyond reciprocity, there is an indirect and networked system of carers and cared-fors in all lives, care already offering or invoking a system both more readily available and more suitable for the production of the kind of transformative contagion Berardi suggests.

Berardi relates an interaction between Sigmund Freud and a young psychoanalyst in which the former informs the latter that psychoanalysis reaches its goal when it is understood that therapy never ends, that it is 'an interminable process' (221). Therapy, then, works towards a horizon that keeps its distance, a walk towards a goal that keeps shifting away. This relates to the forms of futurity artist Valentina Desideri and philosopher Stefano Harney draw out in their conversation on 'Fate Work' (2013). In this, they discuss work fate, the state of being in which we currently operate, in which our sense of the future is intimately tied to our work in multiply unavoidable and problematic ways. They elaborate their opposite, fate work, through the discussion, describing the ways in which it can circumvent the traps of (neoliberal) strategy through proliferating multiple futures at once, futures that cannot be known ahead or selected, rather like the range of political-economic futures Berardi imagines existing simultaneously. For Desideri and Harney, this fate work, this initiation of multiple futures, must be done with others in a relation of complicity, with accomplices, under the auspices of 'a kind of love' (2013: np). In the conversation, the interlocutors emphasise the need to adopt practices of living that avoid work fate and produce fate work through engaging in the present. They advocate a practice that allows us 'to come into the present as sensation,

as something susceptible to the senses and something that in turn works on those senses in the present' (2013: np). This is what I call 'care'. Care does not demand the sense of progress belonging to therapy. Care is not a tool for feeling better in the future, but for growing the sensible pleasures right now. Care is a production of wellness or positive experience in the present, or, as Desideri and Harney describe it, 'a present wealth, a wealth of being in the present together' (2013: np).

I would like to offer an example of this care at work.

There is a video lasting five minutes and one second from the fourth day of studio research. In it, three women I have known for at least ten years each engage in what my collaborators and I call 'care'. I watched the video twice.

First viewing

Lynn is being cared for. There is some music whose origin I don't recall, but knowing these women I can guess that it is Lynn's own choice. Lynn is lying on her back, centre stage, her body appearing relaxed with her dancerly, open hips giving her the model savasana, yoga's corpse pose, despite being unsupported by any mat or blanket, which is how we do this these days. Mel stands, moving gingerly at her feet stage right, awaiting the 'go' from me, which I did not hear, or perhaps was not listening for.

Anna is somewhere nearby, also waiting.

There is a certain scenography set up, yellow fabric and blue yoga mat clamped onto the black curtain by Susie on a previous day, and piles of resources, awaiting use, hoping to be transformed from objects into theatrical properties through their selection, lined up in a row like the dancers in *A Chorus Line*. When the camera starts to record Lynn is already lying down in a rope circle, a ritual marking that part of the space as even more special than the already special place of the stage.

Mel kneels near Lynn's head and folds forward, a kind of perverted balasana, or child's pose, bowing gently and purposefully as if entirely accustomed to performing the humbling gesture of a worshipper before a shrine. Instead of forehead to earth her left check touches the black dance-floor, facing away from me and my camera, her face coming so close to Lynn's that it doesn't quite

seem possible that they wouldn't be touching.

Mel moves gently, to Lynn's side, picking up a hand, later attending to feet. Meanwhile, Anna dashes increasingly frantically, first closing the rope circle to frame Lynn and Mel more neatly, then choosing items to support Mel and Lynn's duet. It is brusque, the kind of careless, perfunctory set of operations of a waitress quickly cleaning and resetting tables in a café during a busy lunchtime. There is a desire to do, a sincere wish to be helpful, but there's simply no time to worry about whether it looks nice as long as it works. It reminds me of the many times for which I cared for my mother, before, during, and after this artistic research period, during her dying process, and it reminds me of seeing mothers, my friends who are mothers, and my mother, and my maternal grandmother, habitually caring for their children with a loving impatience, a sense of distraction.

Anna takes red tape, pulling it out to make another loop, echoing the shape of the rope, and as I write I think of a vulva, of course, a red womany oval, layers of tissue enclosing woman's work. It is significant that we are all women. Moreover, we are all women who care: Anna is a mother, and, in this video, pregnant, though I didn't know it then and I'm not sure she did, either. I associate her personality with caring. She is 'caring', as a feature of her character as well as an action she undertakes. Lynn is also a mother, and a mover, leading movement medicine activities, teaching active birth yoga. I also think of her as caring. Mel and Lynn know each other from the antenatal world in Newcastle, as Mel is a midwife, professionally skilled at caring for other women in both medical and emotional modes; we talked about this during a lunchtime one day. Mel, too, is very caring. Later, she would be the midwife for my friend Sarah, but would not actually deliver the baby because she, too, was on maternity leave, though she is not yet pregnant at the time of the rehearsal. (I sometimes overidentify with Mel because we look quite alike; when we used to work in different branches of the same shoe shop in the early 2000s more than one customer asked if we were sisters. This affects my viewing.) I was not then and am not now a mother, but my mother was then and is now very present in these thoughts despite her current mortal absence.

Anna is working hard, and it shows. She is running into corners, collecting materials, actively trying to add to the space. She takes my pink lamp and pulls it closer to Mel and Lynn, and it breaks. She's kneeling and briefly looks towards the camera, towards me, embarrassedly, and I suppose I shrug or pull a reassuring face because she puts it down and carries on. There is a moment of suspension in her actions and my understanding which seems to slow both movement and comprehension. It's a rupture that brings to light her sense of role, now that it's momentarily fractured, that indexes the performer's work and draws attention to the limits of her action, a kind of workerly

motivation that is choreographic (that is, determines the scope of movements available in space, time, relation, dynamic qualities and so on) as well as interpersonal, despite the fact that I do not remember discussing these things at all. Anna is confident in her skills as a performer and is activating herself from her experience, not requiring direction until set-up falters with a faulty object.

A broken lamp is clearly not going to curb her performance of this role, or maybe even her personal desire to complete the task successfully; I don't know how she feels. She finds stickers and adheres them to Lynn, to Mel, maybe to the floor, consecrating the action and drawing attention away from it, for she is the one with the power to anoint and that's what's important. She's the goddess *and* the priestess *and* the cleaner, asking the others to pick up their legs so she can hoover under them in order to show that it's her space and she can do what she likes and what she likes is making the space nice for everyone. She commands with care, and commands by caring.

A small, pre-fabricated DIY statue made of blue sticky-paper is placed at Lynn's head, a tower of yoga blocks dumped at the side, a mirror hurriedly placed against them after a brief search for an alternative site. Before dumping a bunch of books, opened to random pages one-by-one, between Lynn's legs—another amusing yonic reference, accidental or knowing—Anna robes Mel in a sheet of golden lamé (borrowed from another performance of mine in which, as it happens, it sometimes undertakes the same task) as the latter kneels at Lynn's feet. Anna appears to be unsatisfied with the perfunctory covering, and, with grace no less than with haste pulls out the fabric from behind Mel, a wedding gown or regal costume elongating the collective body Lynn-Mel until it's almost out of shot.

Mel, always calm, walks around to Lynn's left, now, I imagine, with the pulsing gait of a bride or queen taking her time to be seen by the assembled crowd whilst also performing her eager hesitation at the coming rite. She kneels, golden surface hiding small working body from me, the only audience member both in real time and now, in this time of reflection. She takes off her robe and gently lays it over Lynn, lifting and sending it away a couple of times so it billows and then rests.

I don't remember this scene; I wonder if the others do.

Lynn is oblivious, or so it seems.

Second viewing

I can't tell whether or not the things that Mel is doing is something she knows 'works'. Are these particular actions taught in midwifery training, or perhaps on some special course she took once qualified, to advance her skills? Is there a 'Shiatsu 101 for Midwives?' Perhaps she even learnt them with Lynn, on a course for midwives and others supporting childbirth. Or, even, it could be that Lynn taught a bodywork course for professional midwives, and Mel learnt from Lynn to take each hand one by one, lifting the forearm off the earth but keeping the heavy upper arm weighted into the floor, and rocking the lower part of the limb, circling it, gently massaging the upper arm with the elbow as axis. I can't know. I choose to read a complicity; I want there to be an understanding.

Some things I understand just by watching. I can feel for myself just by watching how comforting and relaxing it would be to have gentle, firm pressure applied into ankles, not a squeeze or a nip but the confident touch of someone who often touches bodies, people, for 'a living'. Kinaesthetic empathy activates warmth in my own ankles, and an out-breath, a slight ghostly relaxation despite current tension (I am writing, so I am tense).

Part of Mel's work seems to be surveying, attending. She acts only when she feels it is necessary, and I can choose to think this even though I know I am the one who has given her particular directions which at least implicitly implore her to keep doing something. My reading can flutter between worrying for her, sensing insecurity that she doesn't know what to do, or feels silly, or is concerned with impressing someone—me, Lynn, Anna, some imagined audience, always on the verge of being conjured in a theatre—and more openly seeing her as absolutely in control of the situation.

Necessity is presented here as a construct, a fabrication which becomes real through its satisfaction. I don't suppose Lynn *needed* Mel to lie next to her, foetal, the small, roundish curl of her frame tessellating sideways, slipping head next to head, abdomen next to arm, knees by hip. But as soon as it is done it seems obvious, somehow, that this would be the next thing to do. There is not a need, and then a solution which meets that need; instead, there is an action that is welcomed as much as it was unwanted, or better not known to be wanted, before it occurred. In that sense it is consumed the moment it is produced, because it is not produced—not really, not as its whole—until it is consumed. It disappears between the cracks of productivity, quietly dissolved between usefulness and uselessness.

This particular action has reference. I have the sense that perhaps someone has lain next to me in

this pose, maybe when I was a child, or when I was very sad sometimes. I remember lying like this next to a lover when he was moving into another phase of depression and we were both powerless to fight it, and touching him, it, would have made it all the more heartbreaking, even though that touch would have comforted me. I remember lying like this next to my mother in her bed late in her illness, the room darkened and us both sleepy. Her cognitive capacities were dimming, the whole organism called Mum exhausted, creaturely in its tiredness. I wanted to talk to her but like the movement to touch my past love I knew it was for me, not for her. I lay another time in the same bed, my parents' bed, again with curtains closed, this time on my right side facing away from the door; in this memory I am lying on my mum's side of the bed. I am checking on my dad a few hours after Mum's death. He is depleted and devastated. He says, 'I am just so sad.' I say, 'I know.'

This foetal shape is associated with self-protection and care: it is often an intermediary shape between the final resting pose and returning to worldly awareness at the end of a yoga practice. In films it's a position crying people take, alone, sobbing. It's the shape of spooning when there is more than one and they are facing the same way and they are touching, an image which reminds me of something I read about homosexual sex and the importance of the fact that the two partners are facing in the same direction. I guess it was about men. I can't remember. Spooning sort of makes two into one, a grown-up version of the two-in-one originator of the foetal position, pregnancy. But the foetal position where its performer is solitary in the presence of another is another thing altogether. It carries with it the passivity and receptivity of a tiny baby with the control and attentiveness of an adult. Its vulnerability is in service. Here, as Mel undertakes this act of service; she protects Lynn from the grasping witnesses, real and potential, child and parent in one.

Where I suspect Mel has found herself in this position before, I can speculate that this is the first time she has swept fabric over another human's body for the purposes of 'care'. She finds this possibility quite by accident, noticing the drag of the synthetic softness pulling against Lynn's clothes as she moves around the resting body. She experiments with ways to have the fabric swirl, moving over Lynn and looking back to test not only the movement but its visual impact in the cascading ripple. She walks grandly from Lynn's head to her feet, feet placed carefully, the thin robe stroking her face (I can feel it), then her chest (I can feel it, but less), then her legs (I can feel it, but still less). The material clinging to Lynn's feet, Mel sits downstage of her cared-for, the gold sheet draping classically, and then lies down.

I can know what it feels like to lie next to someone, or to be lain next to, or even to touch another's hands or ankles or legs, or to be touched at the hands or ankles or legs, because these things have

almost certainly happened; they are so strangely commonplace, especially for dance workers, that I can't name particular instances. I am fairly sure, however, that I have never had someone dance gently over for me in order to have fabric move over my flesh, and I believe I am truthful when I say I haven't done this for someone else. But I know what it feels like, I do, and I can sense immediately why it can rest under the description 'care'. We built this exercise with the instructions from the work of another artist, Valentina Desideri, called 'Fake Therapy'. In this she asks participants to assume that there is nothing wrong with anyone and nobody has the power to heal those non-existent problems. But care is different to therapy, for someone can be cared for even if they don't need it, or maybe it's that everyone always needs more care, even if they don't. Once again, it's not that there is a lack that is met with this customer service, and not even that a lack appears once the service is available, but that the surplus is effective, productive, useful. There is no wasted effort here.

Anna, participating in the situation from the outside and her own apparently involuntarily hectic pace, takes the fabric and tucks both women under it, transforming service into mutuality. Now they are together, common.

Lynn is oblivious, or so it seems.

2. On Life

I notice on Instagram a recent trend of identifying the content of a post or of a feed with a word signifying its major topic or theme and the suffix -lyf or -lyfe, a millennial respelling of its homophonous original. It wouldn't be enough, it seems, to (hash)tag a post of a BBQ pulled jackfruit 'pork' burger with #vegan, or, say, an illustration depicting some aspect of postgraduate research, hilarious for its knowing misery, with #PhD. It has to have #veganlyf, or #PhDlyfe, too. It's not that this addition to the tag makes it any more searchable (which is the very function of the tag, after all); in fact, the opposite is more likely to be true. Most of the time it is excessive, for the simple topic word is there as a tag in any case. The purpose of this tag, then, is to stratify and intensify portions of existence, tying them together under their common word. Each image so branded is not seen as a representation of a unique event amongst the countless events within a person's existence, but turns the particular into a general within a tidy man-made channel of activities, which, together, form a 'lyf'. Lyf is streamlined, managed, homogenous. Against real life, in which different sorts of actions make up any one day, it takes effort and resolve to be so consistent, to formulate a lyf. Making a lyf is hard work.

In *Work's Intimacy* (2011), Melissa Gregg discusses the slippages that contemporary working practices cause between work and nonwork aspects of human existence. For the latter of these categories I will here exchange the term 'life', the reasons for which will, I hope, become clear in the following passages; I will use Instagram's lyf as a way of thinking about what this could be. There are various aspects to this sliding of human capacities between work and life. For instance, Gregg describes the much-theorised area of affective and emotional labour, traditionally connected to nonwork life, in which workers in many if not most present-day working cultures in the West are required to deploy interpersonal capacities of kindness, empathy, humour and so on in their day-to-day professional conduct, including but not limited to direct service roles, to the point of exhaustion (2011:10).

The relationships between one worker and another is also subject to additional complexity under these conditions. Where once the workplace setting could be a context in which a person might be 'a long term witness to another person's life' (Sennett 1998:20), a social bond built over time is replaced by the cultivation of 'enforced intimacy' between ever-shifting casts of colleagues

through teambuilding programmes. This results in weaker connections that are less present as supportive emotional ties for the workers and, instead, these relationships serve as temporary synthetic lubricant for the turning of a workteam's productive wheels (Gregg 2011:75). Interestingly, one intimacy appears to replace another: in an earlier image of workplace conviviality, in which permanent contracts resulted in long careers within single workplaces, workers are able to find a 'shared context for daily intimacies' (Gregg 2011:83). It is by working alongside one another over a significant portion of a lifetime that a friendship might develop alongside collegiality, by the happenstance of daily encounters rather than by design. In contemporary corporate culture (and beyond), the creation of bonds occurs through designated moments in the working day: 'birthday morning teas, Friday afternoon drinks and weekend get-to-know-you retreats' (84). Though on the surface, this suggests that workplaces are supporting individual and collective development —the office becoming a place that is 'friendly and fun' (83)—but these relationships are designed to be of service to the employer, to contribute to the creation of value, in Marxist terms. Where work was once a context for a certain form of friendship to be developed, those friendships are now intimate tools for the good of work (Gregg 2011). Of course, it is possible that these friendships could be sincere including ways that might include solidarity or collegiality, but they are constructed in such a way that Gregg is led to describe them as 'simulated' (167). Where the veneer of the simulated is spread over all workplace relationships, it is difficult to put trust in the genuine intimacy of any of them. Is it a work relationship or a life relationship?

In *The Problem with Work* (2011), in the epilogue entitled 'A Life beyond Work', Kathi Weeks asserts that 'life is part of work, and work is part of life. Life as an alternative to work does not pretend to be something more authentic and true, which we can find somewhere outside of work' (232). Nonetheless, following the authors of *The Post-Work Manifesto* (1998), she advocates for 'getting a life' as a method of moving away from a work-centred society. With the invocation of this colloquial directive, Weeks hopes to provide a way to shift the focus of social worth and the right to subsistence from those activities which produce economic value to those that do not. Weeks does not identify clearly what of human existence befits the category 'life', but does provide some guidance in the negative, describing what her theorisation excludes or what problems might arise with its misuse. A drawback Weeks identifies in the positing of work against life is precisely the entanglement which is the topic of Melissa Gregg's book (and which is discussed in much of the work of the writers cited in Chapter 1): the fact that work encroaches upon life in order to steal from its capacities, that 'life could be too easily co-opted by management initiatives and subordinated to their purposes, in which case life would function less against work than as a further basis for its hegemony' (Weeks 2011: 231). Weeks' life is not life if it is indeed for the purpose of work.

Another way in which life is not life for Weeks is if it can be 'recuperated into the logic of commodity culture' (231). By this she means that if that which is called life is those things that can be packaged up, exchanged for money and consumed in private spheres, then the very purpose of creating this category 'life' in opposition to 'work' is undone or at least limited. To my mind, raising this limitation forces a consideration of not only the contents of life but the qualities of those contents, the particular details, the sensible natures of human activity in fine detail. For instance, and in relation to the content of this thesis, the activity 'dancing' is readily commodifiable in multiple ways: expensive commercial dance classes and the accoutrements that come with them ('dancewear', for example); television dance competitions funded by advertisers; dancers hired to entertain partygoers at corporate functions—these would all be suited to a #dancelyf hashtag. Equally dancing can be witnessing an Argentinian tango practica, moving with friends at a party, or jigging to the radio in the kitchen. The actions themselves might be rather similar, but one set is commodified and the other is not, or is at least less so. (The same exposition could be made with all sorts of other things, like cooking, or driving, or football.) In her brief comment on this matter, Weeks is careful not to align commodification with work and non-commodification with life, and, just as with other complexes of concepts, it is far from straightforward. However, I'd like to suggest that the difficulty here is that commodification implies that this part of life's content is *someone's* work: in the case of dancing, a commercial dance class involves a financial transaction, a commodification of the interactions of humans in movement in order that the teacher's labour (and probably, less directly, the innumerable other workers who contribute to that class existing in that place at that time) is remunerated. Some people are working and others aren't, and it is in the direct meeting of the worker and the non-worker (the lyfer?) in which the commodification arises. The actions might *look* similar—they can all be called 'dance'—but the feeling-states and physical experiences produced by them are predicated on all the conditions of their manifestation, including their relative commodification and the relations involved.

So, Weeks' conception of life in relation to work does not come down to commodifiability as a neat axis; rather it emerges in a richer but less tidy way through her method. Weeks' proposition has arisen through a feminist Marxist analysis of the wages for housework campaigns of the 1970s. Through this she charts the ways in which women made demands based on their reproductive labour through repositioning housework *as* work, and the various impacts of these actions. The space that the wages for housework campaign made for women, their labours, and their needs was predicated on the value of work, that is, on a person's social worth and right to freedom based on their contribution to the creation of economic value, in this case through reproductive labour. Housework and other unwaged domestic work were positioned as creating the social world on

which capital accumulation could be possible, becoming productive along the same lines. Though there were many advantages to this tack, one of the problems that Weeks outlines is the fact that this 'continues to build on productivist mandates' (Weeks 2011:230), disabling an argument for an alternative view which could de-centre work. Using this history to make a case for basic income, Weeks asks what would happen if this income was seen not as remuneration for the production of value (now *including* unwaged domestic labour), 'but for the common reproduction of life?' (230). This 'invokes a broader notion of social reproduction than the wages for housework analysis typically offered' (230); that is, it asks us to consider more expansively the kinds of human contributions necessary for our worlds to continue, beyond those associated with production. Moreover, it suggests that to make 'valuable' contributions might be missing the point altogether, that, instead, 'lifeful' actions might be worthy of remuneration from the commons. We might not always know what these lifeful parts of life are doing against any sort of pre-existing rubric but Weeks' proposal implies that human beings deserve the opportunity to sustain their existences nonetheless.

Even though she takes these steps to determine what she considers to be a useful conception of 'life' in relation to work, Weeks is unequivocal about the fact that life and work are not, in fact, cleanly distinguishable. Rather than see the attempt at creating a space for life as an alternative to work as an escape to an exterior plane, life, Weeks writes, 'must be continually invented in the struggle to mark distinctions between fields of experience that nonetheless remain intertwined' (232). If life is to replace value as the purpose of human activities, life is something that needs to be created, rather than simply lived. I don't believe that Weeks is encouraging something like the 'lyf' of Instagram users, though; this is not the sense of invention Weeks avows. In fact, it is possible to consider the creation of a lyf to be something more like the creation of a brand, a laboured and sealed representation of human actions that is dependent on the sorts of labour that draws from formerly non-work human capacities—from the soul, as Berardi would have it. It appears as something of a peak example of the semiocapitalist advances many of the thinkers worked with in Chapter 1 criticise. In the creation of a lyf, work and life are both present. But the 'distinctions between fields of experience' Weeks is taking pains to produce have disappeared. Without distinctions, there can be no intertwining, no space for creative gaps between one kind of human doing and another. The sense of invention, the exciting, potent, possibilities of finding new ways to operate beyond the subsuming of life to work disappear despite the apparent foregrounding of life within lyf. Lyf, in a sense, collapses into itself, finding stability only when it is seamless, unpunctured.

Instagrammers talk about 'curating' their feed. The etymological root of curation is care. There is

great care, of a sort, in the creation of a lyf, as it comes to mean in this writing a slick depiction of a set of behaviours and events through carefully chosen images, shared with the world online. It is not uncommon to see amongst prolific Instagram users a distinct palette of colour or composition consistent through their photographs, or thumbnails that together on the profile page form a larger composite image. Some users alternate photographs with quotes in a particular font on a particular colour background, which, when gathered together, form a satisfying and indeed very careful check effect. If this description all sounds like the determined and studied outputs of the marketing department of a company, then the encounter with such feeds directly is all the stronger; the impact is strong, and strangely confusing, as I try to figure out whether this 'person' is a private individual or a public-facing business. The 'best' Instagrammers, the private individuals whose depiction of lyf is most attractive to followers, are termed 'influencers', and can acquire agents who will sell on their behalf mentions of company names or the chance to have a photograph feature a product. This isn't the social media of an earlier moment when Facebook was beginning and most users seemed to document and present their lives in quite the haphazard, unstructured and forgetful way that feels more 'true to life'. Now, this medium of social media and the savvy with which it is used confuses work and non-work, with meals and relationships and holidays and social gatherings all set and staging and costume for the production of value, for a financial return. Lyf is life as work as life, not intertwined but squashed one into another without room for movement, for nuance. It's a boring trick, a complex masquerade with twists and turns that appear first interesting and formidable but ultimately seem to deflate both work and life. It's not caring, after all, to present as a life something so streamlined and inhuman, disregarding all the rest of what might make a human life, demoting life in all its vivacity and strangeness to a mere tweezed selection of best bits for use at work. Care implies a taking of the whole at once, a holistic attention to all that there is, and this sort of lyf-curation cannot accommodate the attitude of care that life needs.

But perhaps this selective approach is no different from any other interaction between a private life and a worker's contribution. In each phase of economic development—and indeed in each form of work in present times—certain aspects of human capacities are extracted for their application to labour, from the physical strength and skill of, say, a school caretaker, to the intellectual work of a mathematician, to the interpersonal qualities of a nurse. (Of course, no job divides parts of a person in quite such a coarse manner, but some forms of work rest more heavily on certain kinds of capacity than others, resulting in Weberian or Taylorist divisions of labour). What would be the problem with this? In some ways there isn't one: in order to survive we need to exercise something of ourselves to gain the necessary sustenance of all sorts to reproduce. In other ways, each form of labour carries with it its own downfall: profoundly physical work has a detrimental impact on the

body (I think of my late maternal grandfather, a former miner, with his double hip replacement and rough breathing). Many of the critics of late capitalism, with its affective, aesthetic and intellectual demands, detail the effects of such work on the individual, from Campagna's evocation of zombie-like religiosity (2013) to the personal near-breakdown described vividly by Southwood (2011). Berardi extends this to an account of a society riddled with mental ill-health, offering something in the direction of a solution via therapy (2009), as discussed in Chapter 1. In these ways, the form of work has an impact (at least mostly) on the corresponding aspect of the worker. But the creation of a lyf as a form of work has an ever-greater intimacy with the worker's personhood than the intimacy of post-Fordist, cognitive labour described by Gregg (2011). It's not just the character that is corroded, as Richard Sennett would have it (and he's writing, on this, in 1998, before social media existed). It's not just that work and life are swapping aspects, with professional communication taking place in the domestic environment or friendships harnessed by the business apparatus and the like. It's that a whole life is offered up as the site of work. It is more like the lifeworks of performance artists like Tehching Hsieh: just as cultivated, just as aesthetic. I want to write that it is just as knowing, but I hesitate. I don't think the 'influencers' of Instagram producing lyfs *do* see that they're doing that; their activity shares the sort of accidental pervasiveness of other forms of affective labour, in that there's a sucking in or sliding down of the usual boundaries of life and work, similar to the breaking down of workers' boundaries between the professional and the personal described in the writing of Melissa Gregg. Where Hsieh and others designated a period of life to do something which became an artwork, these social media workers crop away sections of life, leaving behind the representation of the selected highlights. It's *obvious* that Hsieh's lifeworks are not the documentation of a normal life but an aesthetic offering, whereas even the designation 'lyf' proposes that this is all of what a person is (even if the experienced lyfer can afford to occasionally insert an ironic gesture towards their self-awareness as a brand). If typical forms of affective labour cause mental ill-health, then this intensification of lyf-as-work may provoke even graver concerns. What could *its* therapy be? Where do the bits of life that lyf discards *go*?

I think this trend of the creation of lyf does not only demonstrate or exemplify an increasing tendency towards the collapse of work and life in a particular direction. It is also an opportunity to consider again what *of* life, as in Kathi Weeks' suggestion, might be of importance. Where lyf is consistent, life is varied and jangled with paradoxes; where lyf is publicly shared, equally amongst everyone, life might be private, or, more likely, operating with different degrees of publicity according to sometimes erratic individual tendencies; where lyf's events manifest in order to draw attention, life's events might be more or less interesting without much consideration; where lyf functions in the interests of commercial gain (even if that gain is only in the potentiality represented by

a rise in the number of followers), life happens only for itself, or has multiple, interrelated functions that evade a neat purpose; lyf follows or has followers, life has all kinds of relationships of different strengths and tones.

In the rest of this chapter, I will build from here to search for life. Life against lyf seems renegade, maverick. Rather than an amorphous blob of whatever is not work, life is indistinct but dynamic, requiring the 'struggle' to give it its space (Weeks 2011: 232). To find it, describe it, look for its consequences and rejoice in its possibilities, it needs to be posited against its opposites; in the previous chapter this was work. This work has now been expanded to include not only the qualities associated with labour in the well-theorised post-Fordist economy, but extends to this new form of work, the creation of a lyf. Searching for life, then, is a response to Weeks' call for this as a potential opposite to the difficult, uncomfortable, undesirable or even dangerous aspects of work, a way to enlarge the scope of value-making within human activity, thus decentring work whilst still keeping it in view in a complex, rather than binary, way.

It may be obvious, but it strikes me as important to note that I am a heavy Instagram user. I find myself almost writing that this is not for commercial use, but then I think to the many images of rehearsals, of set, of amusing moments from production that I uploaded and shared for the purposes of marketing, albeit to only my few hundred followers, most of whom are dance and performance professionals, because that's whom I know. It would be too much to call this a lyf, and I have never used this tag, but sometimes I regret the inconsistency of my digital offer midst the plethora of better-'curated' accounts, such as the designer with whom I worked on *Recreation*, Emer Tumilty. She hasn't made a lyf for herself, but her profile certainly supports her professional life, her branding, better than mine does. Mine seems to have a bit too much life for its own (commercial) good: photographs of dogs I know, reposts of me sitting in a tree, a nice view. In this chapter I seek to unfold the IRL (a common shorthand for In Real Life) version of my Instagram life in a particular context: the production of the performance *Recreation*. In so doing, I use the production of an artwork—something I have already, in Chapter 1, placed within the context of a complicated form of work—as the lens through which I might access life, drawing out life's non-workness through muddling as well as pulling apart.

Context

Recreation developed from the weeks of research and development analysed in Chapter 1 with continued funding from Arts Council England and other supporters. The phase of production which is the topic of this chapter involved three weeks of studio-based rehearsals in December 2016 and January 2017, and then a further three weeks in May and June 2017. These latter weeks were punctuated by a preview, in-progress performance at Yorkshire Dance, Leeds prior to the final week of rehearsal, after which the performance was premiered at ARC, Stockton Arts Centre in Teesside. Rehearsals took place at Northumbria University and Dance City (Newcastle), Dance4 (Nottingham), ARC, and Yorkshire Dance. The team for each week included three core performers, selected from the larger pool of participant-performers in the research and development process, plus other creative collaborators including a set and costume designer, a lighting designer, two artistic advisors with different emphases, producer Beckie Darlington, and sometimes visits from staff members from partner organisations. In addition to the core cast, in the final two days of each five-day working week we were joined by two guest performers, local to the venue. This mirrors the performance itself, whose cast shares this composition. In most rehearsal periods, it was possible to organise for one of these local guest performers to be a member of the host venue's staff, a key element in the set-up of the production. Each of the five people performing always had different relationships to the idea of being a professional dancer; some of the reasons for and consequences of this will appear in the following writing.

For an independent artist without a permanent infrastructure to support the production of performances, this is a relatively complex situation, in which I was highly involved with every detail of the project, from emails arranging times of meetings to the exact colours of the backdrop as well as, of course, the minutiae of the events on stage. It would not be possible to provide anything like a comprehensive description of all details of everything that happened, nor would it be very interesting. This writing, along with the rest of this thesis, is necessarily selective, with components, situations, or characters chosen for examination in accordance with the purpose of the chapter. Here, that is to uncover some of the lifeful aspects of what went on, and to see how these might further the thinking around an opposition to the negative aspects of work. Of course, this work was certainly work, not least as described in the previous chapter. Here, I want to push life into focus, seeing where work and life come apart, re-meet and cause productive confusion, proliferation, stasis or complication.

Methodology

As I've described, lyf is the artificial production of a pattern, a pattern so neat and clean and perfect as to evade any sense of the mixed-up, murky swirl of real life. It's not the kind of pattern that might be discussed by sociologists or historians, looking in the swell of existence for trends and through-lines to bring insight on human behaviour into discourse. It is used here as a tool as it invites a consideration of what it lacks, and so as a form of work can illuminate areas of life that sit outside labour.

The use of this conceptual frame finds itself best used in a method of exposition which can enable a generous unfolding of life's variety and disorder. To do this, in this chapter I am choosing to work with a hybrid, a methodological meeting-point and coming-together. My intention is not to deploy any of them in their entirety, nor am I merely looking at what I am doing and trying to retrospectively tack my efforts to disciplines that might give them more weight. I am consciously working through the means and forms and agendas of a number of ways of doing research in order to produce the thinking necessary to develop a set of expositions in this chapter and a direction of thinking that proceeds throughout the thesis as a whole.

As I have written earlier, part of the approach is ethnographic. It has a distinct field—in this chapter, the production period of *Recreation*, a dance performance for theatre spaces—and a position from which I, the ethnographer, am witnessing, observing, following, participating, noting and analysing that which I find in that field. Just as with any ethnography, this vantage point is limited and problematic. Just as with any ethnography, the ethnographer's presence changes that which she observes. Unlike some other ethnography, my position as choreographer-ethnographer, artist-scholar, could be understood as somehow simpler, in fact, than the typical ethnographer taking part in an activity or community in which they wouldn't usually be included, in that because I am the witness and analyst of my own choreographic project the whole set-up is that I will be a large part of the decision-making. It's a given. My presence as choreographer rather than scholar will have always been a determining factor in what happens. I have to be there to make it happen, else it would be a different project altogether. I can't *but* acknowledge my somewhat overdetermined presence, so I take it, in this chapter, as a starting point from which to discuss the lifeful potentials within the making of *Recreation*. It is in this sense I consider this project autoethnographic. It is me writing about my own experience in a project that was initiated by me (in Chapter 4 I will also discuss the work of others, albeit in a curatorial frame of my co-devising). I start with myself in the numerous ways that autoethnography frames—intimate, somatic, cognitive, sensorial,

relational—together relaying and considering what appears in the field (Ellis 2012).

In this chapter in particular, I am working with a feature of autoethnographic methodology more deliberately: I am working with narrative, with storytelling, despite the accounts being non-fictional (unlike, for example, Carolyn Ellis' 2003 autoethnographic novel *The Ethnographic I*). In what follows, I tell a number of short stories drawn from the time making *Recreation*. Following autoethnographic methods, I have tried to find appropriate forms for these stories, purposefully and I hope productively invoking something of the literary in order to be able to think through specific moments, working more carefully with the form as well as using language as our standard communicative tool (Ellis 2012). I am not a poet or novelist but a choreographer, writing, and that has benefits and disadvantages. Part of this choreography has been thinking about the page, and about my own metaphorical dancing in relation to that of others. I wanted to keep my own dancing, my own storytelling, intact, whilst being able to place it in relation to other thinking to enrich the narrative. I have done this in the form of annotations. In the first two of the three story-like episodes, I take with me theoretical companions to elaborate the themes. In the final one, I have chosen a literary companion in the form of a novel; choosing quotations from Max Porter's novel *Grief is the Thing with Feathers* (2015) and placing them in conversation with my own narrative is a literary-theoretical experiment which, I feel, makes more vivid the conversation about work and life through a quality of grief. This method of writing, with narratives plus discussion, allows for a longer elaboration of what happened, a closer reading of life, as life itself becomes the focus for this chapter. This takes up more space on the page and time in the reading, a temporality closer to life as it unfolds.

This writerly experimentation connects this practice to another discipline: everyday life studies. As Ben Highmore suggests, this field has and continues to be invested in a meeting of social sciences and literature in form as well as content (2002). Though these approaches have been delegitimised or criticised for 'simply aestheticising social life' (2002:20), because this chapter itself seeks to find moments in an art project, already an aesthetic domain, in which life and work, non-art-making and art-making (mostly), get bashed together, entangled, hollowed and refilled, I see a good fit, and, moreover, an opportunity to try to achieve a mode of expression that might be productive in a way not possible with typical academic prose. In Highmore's broad and detailed introduction to *The Everyday Life Reader* (2002), he describes everyday life studies' strategy of 'denaturalising' everyday phenomena. Proponents of the discipline make, sometimes through cross-cultural estrangement, montage or borrowing the form of another discipline, an event or trend strange and unfamiliar, producing new insight into its being in the world. In a sense, this

chapter does the inverse, trying to renaturalise events and actions, to speak for them as part of a continuous flow of a life which has meaning within its unspecialness. Of course this is unachievable, for in selecting specific moments to describe and discuss they attain or express special status, but this is not the glamorous commercial status of an Instagram photo designed to attract followers. This renaturalisation comes with a focus on 'non-ideational sensation', which I extend from Highmore's examples of the 'tactile and odorous' to the affective and relational, for these too can exist outwith the frame of ideas (2002:20); this involves an attention to the minutiae of experience, from my own imagined conversations to the coffee-drinking of others, which take place adjacent to but not within the framework of concepts, belonging instead in the domain of the sensate.

Perhaps one of the most important things to be drawn from this brief address towards everyday life studies can be found in Highmore's discussion of its history amongst other crisscrossing disciplines: the question of the general versus the particular: is it the job of the scholar to attend to the micro, the aberrant, the special, or the general, the pattern, the repeated? Cautious not to subsume instances of individual and complex theoretical contributions into this sweeping binary, Highmore proposes poles that represent tendencies, rather than strict boundaries. Everyday life studies works amongst these tendencies, with some writers favouring micro-analyses that hover over the particular, and others using the lived experience of everyday life to seek patterns in macro-analyses. This reminds me to return to the question of lyf versus life, reminds me for what I am looking. The creation of a lyf is predicated on uninterrupted patterning, the synthetic repetition of forms in perpetuity and contiguity. Life, or the life studied by everyday life studies, could be seen as the synthesis of the general and particular, which, as Highmore describes following everyday life thinker Henri Lefebvre, 'could be an endless chain of everyday particularities and plural differences, linked in ways that neither obliterate them nor abandon them to isolation' (2002: 14). It is in this spirit that I go forth, to describe these everyday particularities with a view to producing some insights into their links and their meanings, without diminishing them to aberrant singularity nor rendering their connections smooth, as in a lyf. I am looking for moments which seem rich with life in an experiential way—in that they seem especially charged with a kind of lifefulness Kathi Weeks implores us to find—in order that they can push themselves past or through or in front of lyf, even past or through or in front of work.

Care

I'm looking at photographs taken by Kit, one of the core performers, during a workshop at Dance4. As with most of the places the project visited in its production, the afternoon of the third day of each week was given over to a workshop open to the public. At Dance4, in Nottingham, the workshop filled up quickly, perhaps because I'm an associate artist there so visit regularly enough to be known a bit, but more likely because it was half-term so those studying or working in education settings found themselves free.

There's at least a double-layering of Kit's work in this scenario. Kit is part of the cast and has been since the team was composed. He's not a professional dancer by any means, but is married to one (another member of the cast, Amanda) and so has been around contemporary dance for a significant portion of his life. He's a musician; he and Amanda met on a collaborative project. He has also worked with me as a technician on a previous touring production where we needed specialist support with the sound systems we had to work with on this tour of pubs and gig venues. Our knowing of one another is through work, and here his contract says he is working as a performer and is being remunerated as such.

Kit is a photographer. He's not quite a professional photographer, or at least wouldn't call himself that. Earlier in the process he had spoken about how everything he does as a hobby eventually finds its way into his livelihood. He takes photographs of the beautiful countryside around the Hadrian's Wall home he and Amanda are renovating. He does vintage-style portraits for bands and burlesque acts in the northeast of England. Some of his photographs of the previous show I mentioned above are of my favourites, even though they were snapped from his corner at the side of the stage from which he operated the

It seems important to include Kit's position in the cast, and the position of photography in Kit's life, before going on to think this story through an aesthetics of care. In James Thompson's essay on the topic he begins with a story of a Congolese colleague who comes for treatment in the UK after an incident which left him very injured. Thompson describes how he and his wife both found themselves describing the caring relationships and practices in which Thompson's colleague was involved as *beautiful*, using the language of the aesthetic to discuss care (Thompson 2015). Kit also began photography because its beauty interested him; now it is a serious part of his work. The motivation has changed.

sound. Kit does make money from his photography work, most notably through the business he and Amanda own and run, a 1920s-style photobooth with a set in the form of a crescent moon which people hire for weddings, parties, and events. On this day Kit does not have a neat backdrop for his photography. Though all the participants have signed a consent form, and we have verbally introduced Kit and the fact he will be photographing as well as co-leading the session with Amanda, Viki and me, and given time for anyone who isn't comfortable being photographed to see Kit individually, *and* announced that a certain warm-up exercise referring to sexual movements will neither be witnessed nor photographed, the participants seldom pose for Kit's lens. I, for one (though one who is sensitive about her image being captured), forget all about the camera, and I think the others mostly do too.

As Thompson describes, the literature on care has often placed care ethics in opposition to justice ethics. These actions of ethics participate in the justice ethics regime; part of this is about privacy and data control. But here it *is* also caring, or at least undertaken from the point of view of wishing to take care of the people who share the space, recognising my power and privilege and feeling that I am being 'called to care' (Thompson 2015: 432).

Not everyone. In one image, Greg looks down the lens cheekily from his snuggled posture with Paul and a man whose name I don't remember. Let's call him Brian. Brian appears to be the base of this cluster, lying on his back with left leg outstretched and right knee bent, foot on the floor. His left palm faces down and the muscles of his arm look active, forcefully pressing into the floor. Paul lies over the outstretched leg, his own right arm hooked underneath. Paul's head and shoulder lean into Brian's bent leg. This is not a pose that looks comfortable. Greg is sitting, his small legs folded beneath him. His large abdomen leans uneasily into Brian, countering Paul's weight from the other side. Brian's right arm reaches around in a gesture of support—Greg doesn't find it easy to hold his own weight upright—but the photograph doesn't show that. The photograph as photograph shows an unusual kind of cuddle, a connecting of multiple people in interlinked ways, pressing skin against fabric, hair against skin, muscle against floor against fascia against mat against bone against breath. Three men hold each other. Three men nestle, settle, compose themselves in relation to

one another. The composition reaches an apex as Greg's head rests on the peak of Brian's knee, temple against the bottom of the thighbone, face angled slightly. It's angled in this way to acknowledge the camera, to offer a smile. The angling looks awkward, uncomfortable. Where Brian's profile shows closed eyes and all that can be seen of Paul's head is his half-shaved haircut, topped with a puff of fair froth, Greg is alert. The photograph shows a resting body and a working mind, moving out of absorption in the arrangement to present an image.

Slightly beyond the men kneels Amanda. She is relaxedly upright, hands on knees, with her typically straight posture, all shoulders-back-collarbones-wide: the posture of a highly-trained dancer. Behind the tangled trio, her hands rest on her knees. Like Greg, her head is angled, but not towards the camera. Her gaze rests slightly beyond the unmarked legs creeping into the bottom left corner of the shot. In the photograph as photograph she looks distracted, thinking about other things, wistful. The light from the window catches her profile from the back and renders her features dark; her expression is made serious by the contrast. In the photograph as reminder I know she's looking at the other twelve or so participants stretching out beyond the first three men in their extended tangle. Amanda isn't in her own world; she's working. Amanda is sitting in this particular spot because she wants to support Greg. She is very experienced in working in participatory dance and can easily see where an extra pair of hands or pair of eyes or pair of legs or pair of words can make the difference between being able to join in or not for some participants. In this image, as in the lived moments, this sitting out is not to be out but to be very deeply in, to remove oneself from the fun of participating in order to be available for a different sort of being-there.

In these photographs sitting up means working. In a later image, a worker who has come to support Greg sits up. The thirteen

Thompson describes an aesthetics of care as an ethics of care played out in the domain of artistic production. I would like to extend this term in a Rancièrian fashion, thinking about a care aesthetics that is a distribution of the sensible in the orientation of care. This distribution of the sensible—this dividing and sharing of that which can be sensed, is, Rancière asserts, that from which new politics, new community, can be created (2004). These are, then, notes towards an aesthetics of care which can produce a politics of life.

The aesthetic of care is a lifeful aesthetic—not as an opposition to work but in this case through something conceived of as a *work*shop—working with while going beyond Thompson's assertion that 'the aesthetics of care seeks to focus upon how the sensory and affective are realised in human relations fostered in art projects' (2015: 436).

other people in the frame each lie on their right side, facing towards the left of the image, stage right. The soles of their feet, bare or stockinged, point towards the camera, towards Kit. The similarity of their positions—each somewhat foetal, the high point of their outer left hip the edge of a chevron of legs—betrays small differences: the varied closeness of bodies, the use of arms to hug in or push away, the tucking in of soles against the top of another's foot, one foot further backwards or forwards or down or up than the other. There are some bolder differences: Greg's legs don't fold this way, so his left knee points up, and Brian, behind him, has his legs outstretched. Still, the image looks very carefully composed. In the photograph as photograph I see the newly-hung draping backdrop, beautiful in the wonderful light of the Dance4 studio with windows on two opposite sides, the variations in the individual compositions of bodies feeling designed and purposeful. On closer inspection, I see the red train of part of the backdrop leading towards a discarded garment, some scraps of paper, a chair peeping into shot, half a yoga block. Despite the composition, the photograph can't hide the messy traces of the activity before the snapshot. In the photograph as reminder, I feel myself in the midst of the line-up, despite the fact that I joined this exercise after this photograph was taken; I'm not there in the image. I feel my sitting bones and the backs of my thighs resting against someone else's quadriceps, my back against their front. I know I rock a little to find the sweet spot where my pelvis doesn't jut into the floor, and I probably bring my left leg forward of my right; I like the slight twisting stretch. I'm a cuddler: I put my arm around the person in front, finding a place for my head. I don't like to have my nose and mouth covered. I need to feel that I can breathe.

Breathing is what this sculpture of bodies does. Abdomen-to-abdomen contact means that one person's breath is felt by the next and the next and the next, the swelling rib

In the writing to the left there are layers of the aesthetic. On one layer there is the photograph, taken with care and observed with care. Kit's photographs are beautiful, striking. My viewing of the photograph is given space and time on the page and in the reading and writing, the long (or longer) time Thompson calls for in the production of an aesthetics of care (2015: 437). The senses are conjured in the text: bodily position, touch, smell. They are senses in relation; part of the difficulty of this action, of caring, is knowing that the carer can sense the cared-for, her weight, her shape, her temperature, her moisture.

One of the characteristics of *Recreation*, both as an artwork and as a process, is that things take a long time. This is not in the sense of the long-term projects Thompson privileges in his aesthetics of care, but, again turning to Rancière, I want to suggest that even this relative length is a kind of redistribution of the sensible in the direction of care *in the moment*, creating the potential for an inefficient lifefulness.

cages conduits for a pulsating, irregular rhythm. It's not that the breath becomes one breath—that's a push, even for my romantic sensibilities—but the breathing becomes one breathing. It's like breathing for the same purpose, breathing put to work not only as the mysterious lifeforce of an individual body but put to work as the connector of this new, multi-headed, multi-limbed collective body of one and many.

'Make yourself ever more comfortable' is the primary instruction for this exercise. Despite the intimacy of the frame, it seems that this instruction never solicits a moving-away of any individual. It always makes people move closer. Some things appear to come naturally: hooking a top leg over the leg of the person in front alleviates tight hips, or rolling forward makes more space to find alternative pressure points. Other things come with practice: the core performers, especially Viki, each have ways to change orientation, facings or body shapes. I like to roll onto my back, overlapping with the person behind me, who then usually moves a bit. It invites the person in front of me to change shape, perhaps finding a diagonal to use my soft belly as a cushion for a shoulder or head. I find it comfortable, and comforting.

When I make myself ever more comfortable I am responsible only for myself, for making more space for my breath, for my breathing flesh. I am not of service; even though I am always the director of the situation, when I am participating I am not asking anything of anyone and not providing anything for anyone. But by making myself ever more comfortable I also make space for others to do the same; I accidentally take care by not being very bothered. For me, the closeness means this spaciousness of experience. I can drop the workerly efforts, the pains taken to keep everything going, and retreat into this shared singularity, where each person seeks their own comfort in relation to the others. In this way my own needs, my own life, is foregrounded in my experience not in spite of everyone else but in

An aesthetics of care and a feeling of individual comfort are not the same thing. The care practices that Thompson's colleague benefited from included detailed and painstaking physiotherapy. In this workshop activity—and in the performance element to which it is analogous—the aesthetics of care complicate the relationship between individual comfort and group responsibility on a sensorial level. Care ethics questions the 'individual rational actor' as primary ethical agent, looking rather to the connections between people (Thompson 2015:433). Here, the connections between people and their ethics are determined by individual aesthetic (that is sensible, sensorial) choices: this is care as self-care.

companionship with everyone else doing the same. I don't even need to do the usual workshop-leader work to be with anyone; everyone's working and not working for themselves in a series of self-satisfying closed-loops that interlink with every other loop. It's self-supporting without being selfish.

In other images from this series I see more closely the development of this spooning practice. I see Hannah echoing Paul's lean body as he lies on his front and she lies half-over him, her breath over his right scapula and her hand over his left. Beyond her the other Amanda faces the other direction, so their bums touch, and beyond *her* there is a tangle of indistinguishable human, knees and fingers and eyebrows and toenails peeking from the mass. Core performer Amanda, my Amanda, rests her head on the back of Paul's thigh, her relaxed hand folding near her chin. Paul's arm hugs Brian, his hand tucking under Greg. Brian is lying on his back, face meeting sky, and touches the pale skin of Paul's forearm. In yet another photograph I see my own contented face, the mass that is my hair forming a sea with two other dark-haired women's manes. In looking at these images I experience a softness even as my writing brings aptly fleshy fingers to the cold hard plastic of a keyboard. The images are so squashy, fleshy, hairy, and somehow warm and smelly in that good human way, the warm smelliness of people near one another. I'm so aware of skin and fabric, the textures of beings, and I'm so aware of fascia and fat, the textures of beings from within. How could this not be life?

It is a 'combination of values and practices' which support an ethics of care (Thompson 2015:433). Here, in this workshop exercise, I can see values of work and of life, practices of work and of life, mixed together in as tangled a way as my hair is, as the bodies are. An aesthetics of care creates the potential for a politics of life not in negation to work but by a kind of overpowering of the senses, by stimulating enough of a sensing organism through the practices of care that the perceptual objects associated with work become less important.

Of course, this exercise involves all sorts of labours. It involves the creative, intellectual, imaginative labour needed for the comprehension of the task, the putting to one side or otherwise processing any discomfort at the unusual demands, the emotional work of surrendering to the closeness of other human beings, however well-prepared the group might have been by the other activities in the session. It requires communicative

labour of a profound sort, one beyond the linguistic and into the sensorial, or something even more mysterious. It is, it's safe to say, in the realm of physical labour: though the instruction is to make ourselves ever more comfortable, this is not without effort, the efforts to relax, to notice, to be aware, to follow physical impulses and so on. It's not *manual* labour, neither in the sense of belonging mostly or exclusively to the hands, nor in the sense of it being very demanding in a brute way, but it is physical work, work of the body. Collecting all these together doesn't drag the worker through history, cumulatively adding on the pains of work through the manual to the affective; rather, it synthesises all the human capacities that have been put to work through even relatively recent history to resist their application to the productive in any visible sense.

And still, the sitting worker is sitting, working. She is designated the worker, rather than the participant, by her sitting out. I interpreted her wish to sit out to be more to do with her own discomfort at the description of the activity in its introduction than through any sense of adherence to her role as specialist supporter. Nonetheless, her separation and verticality are protected by this role; she's hiding from what is happening in plain view, using the tactic of work. Because she is sitting out she cannot, in fact, really help at all; she can't have any real idea of what is going on, not on the level at which her companion is working, not somatically. She's not doing much, sitting there, watching. She's not doing anything that could be called work in any usual sense; I'd say the participants who are lying on the floor and cuddling are engaged in much more effort, individual and collective. In doing so she is neither working nor not working, sitting in limbo. And because she's not working, she's not benefiting from the bodily, felt life that is produced by these strange efforts. Her so-called work has prevented her from participating in the juicy life-work of the others, of us.

This worker is the only person who might be normatively described as a 'carer'; she is the support worker for a disabled person and sometimes such workers acquire this title; we discussed it when she arrived. Where Thompson's development of his conception of an aesthetics of care came from an 'unfortunate intervention of the professional into…personal life' (2015:432), here it is this carer's professional edges being challenged but ultimately not surrendered, putting into question her own call to care and the reciprocal consequences of the resistance.

Grief

All the quotations in this column are taken from *Grief is the Thing with Feathers* (2015). The bracketed numbers are page numbers.

It's Tuesday 20 June 2017. I don't remember the date because it's a special one to me. There's no birthday or anniversary. I didn't write it down. Nothing particular happened on this day to have me remember the date. I worked out on what date this event happened from remembering the organisation of the week during which my collaborators and I premiered Recreation.

'CROW: I believe in the therapeutic method' (12).

In this memory I am sitting in the cafe at ARC in Stockton-on-Tees, the friendly multi-artform venue at which we are working and to which we later that week welcome an audience of mostly people I know from my home city Newcastle upon Tyne, forty miles away. I have sat in the cafe most mornings, working on my computer as I am now, either preparing activities for the rest of the day, writing emails, rewriting text elements of the performance, or worrying. In another space, the three core performers warm up. I have been banished from this part of the studio-day, as my presence is both distracting and inefficient; I find myself telling stories and jokes and thinking of ever more exercises or practices that could support the performers in their performance. It is better if I leave it, them, alone. By this part of the process, this is part of the work to which I am no longer invited. The performers, a bit like children in relation to schoolteachers outside of the classroom, don't *really* know what I'm doing in this time and never ask. But it's not really the performers who have done the uninviting; of course, it is me who is ultimately responsible for the project and if I wanted to be there I would be. It is as if the project itself has expelled me—it needs its own life without me, even if it's only for an hour a day.

'Today I got back to work.

I managed half an hour and then doodled' (11).

I remember this day because after being in the cafe, drinking my decaf black coffee given to me for free because I'm an artist working there, I am to go downstairs to the Workshop. The Workshop is a multipurpose space. I've been to an artists'

mixer there, and seen choirs of older people sing. It's pretty grey, with a hard floor and no windows. It is not an ideal rehearsal space for two days before the performance. On this morning, we can't use the theatre for rehearsal, because this is the morning we've designated as technical time, where the show's lighting designer and the in-house team can do their work uninterrupted. Or, from another view, the cast has moved their operations downstairs so that *they* can work uninterrupted. I remember conversations about this division of space and activities with producer Beckie, remember asking her to ask ARC if there was another room, and she asking when should that happen? Tuesday morning. Wednesday we'll have the workshop and Monday we need to set everything up. We need everything ready for Thursday and Friday. So: Tuesday morning.

That's how I know it's Tuesday 20 June 2017. The date of the premiere was 22 June. This is indelible in my mind. The intimacy of this knowledge feels harsh, branded; I don't want the calendar to be imprinted in me in this way. In most of my working life I am floating in time, plugging along with longer or shorter tasks completed day-to-day, but not with any routine. I don't remember what happened last Tuesday. I know I worked, worked at home, worked alone, but I can't remember what happened when, what I read or wrote exactly, to whom I spoke on the phone, or what I drank or ate in between or during working. If I saw anyone I don't remember what our encounter contained. Rehearsal weeks are different. Because of the nature of my practice I am seldom in one venue for more than a week at a time. These dates are planned months in advance and are discussed at length; they are reiterated between the team, the team and the organisational partners, and each of us with friends and family as we tell those about us where we're going, please could you water the plants, sure, you can have my flat, I won't be there, I'll be in Nottingham making the show and then going straight to Leeds. The dates for these activities,

'We are agreed the book will reflect the subject. It will hop about a bit. Parenthesis hope my book might appeal to everyone sick of Ted & Sylvia archaeology. It's not about them, we agree. We neglect to discuss what it should be about' (27).

these special weeks or days that scaffold what looks like the real work of a choreographer, are scorched into my memory. It's as if each time these dates are mentioned a line is drawn onto paper with a scratchy nib, one over the other, so that eventually there is not so much a dark line of ink but an incision, a permanent alteration in the feeling of time. It disturbs my sense of the distribution of my activities, their relative importance and visibility not only to others but to myself. It's as if all this sitting on my sofa in a dressing gown reading and writing and sending emails and adjusting budgets and sending invoices isn't the work, the work is only the work when it is contained by dates in multiple personal diaries and venue calendars, shared and repeated. To know these dates, to be able to figure out when things happened according to work schedules, reminds me that as much as I think I work 'independently' and organise 'my' 'own' time, that I have the luxury of a freelance life (of sorts, during this research process), I am organised by my work. This 'I', these intimate parts of me that manifest as memories or feelings or emotions, of elusive senses of what is important, my parts in relationships, my process of nutrition and digestion, even (the coffee given to me at ARC is not what I would usually consume at this time of day), are sliced into shapes according the parts of my labouring endeavours that look more like work. Sometimes the life outside work seems pushed aside by work, but on closer inspection work cuts through life in varied difficult and joyous ways.

This is the case only because of the specificities of my situation. Not all independent choreographers, even, balance their portfolios in this way. Some have an office, for example, a place for working that makes every day feel like real work in a real workplace, somewhere to go in the morning and leave in the evening, where one must wear appropriate clothing for meeting others. Others are much more prolific than I am, going from project to project, residency to gig to residency to gig, with the

patches in between being either work or holiday or some kind of mixture but still being the minor aspect midst the production or presentation, the real work. Others still maybe do other kinds of dance-related or non-dance related work between creation periods, or their making of art knits into other kinds of activity on certain days of the week, for instance. I am not so situated. As a result, my experience is that the weeks of 'working on the performance'—that is, those weeks where it looks like I'm working on the performance—are quite as special and separate as they might be for the guest performers who take part in the project for a few sessions at a time. The rest of my work feels like my life, the routine collection of ordinary things that include working from home as well as exercising, friendship, moving house, washing and so on. The rehearsal and creation weeks, in comparison, are memorable, specific, set aside for a sort of work which doesn't happen always and requires very precise conditions for its manifestation. It feels like I'm playing a role. There's an effort in remembering those lines, that staging, these movements, all required to manifest the situation of doing the real stuff of 'being a choreographer' for a period of a week at a time. 'Being a choreographer' also implies certain things about the structure of my life for those periods: it means I live in someone else's house, rented to me so I can live the life of a choreographer in this city or that town; it means preparing a set of clothes to wear only for that week and probably doing no laundry; it means eating more often in restaurants than at 'home' for the period, because it's less likely that there's somewhere to cook or even to sit and eat; it means socialising only with people related the project. Life is still life—I still shower and meditate and eat and date and all the other things—but the contents seem cornered, specific, cut up. It's a bit like being on holiday, but a holiday which involves working all day, a holiday from life.

'There was very little division between my imaginary and real worlds, and people talked of sensible workloads and recovery periods and healthy obsessions' (38).

'Where are the fire engines? Where is the noise and clamour of an event like this? Where are the strangers going out of their way to help, screaming, flinging bits of emergency glow-in-the-dark equipment at us to try and settle us and save us?' (13).

'There should be men in helmets speaking a new and dramatic language of crisis. There should be horrible levels of noise, completely foreign and inappropriate for our cosy London flat.

There were no crowds and no uniformed strangers and there was no new language of crisis. We stayed in our PJs and people visited and gave us stuff.

Holiday and school became the same' (14).

Sitting in the cafe at ARC presses me into even more of an in-between state. I am only in this place in this town because of work, and I would never be there otherwise. I am sort of working, I suppose, sitting at my computer, but though I'd like to think I was being productive I recall clearly my fractured attention, my desire to get involved in what I was witnessing. I'm not, here, in the studio or theatre, and that seemed to give me license to inhabit the patterns of the territory in which I found myself. I look around at the others in the space: the staff getting organised for the rest of the day, construction workers coming in and out of a private door behind which the kitchen is being renovated, other artists and companies having meetings over MacBooks and coffees, and the people of Stockton, chatting and drinking teas and eating scones. I don't feel like working here, neither in the sense that I don't feel like I am working, nor in my wishes; my volition was not to work. If I'd *really* wanted to do some concentrated work I would have found myself a spot elsewhere in the large venue, a bar area empty in the morning maybe, or the never-used green room. It seems I want to be in this place of non-work within this place of work; my actions and wishes resonate with the structures of the building. I don't feel I am working because I am too connected to the lifeful, front of house of the venue. There are the people here, like me, who might have snuck out of the behind-the-scenes of an arts venue, into this other, non-working space. Mostly, though, and particularly because this is a place also visited for its cinema and café, there are those local people who are definitely not working, or definitely appear to me to be not working.

I find myself focused on a woman of about seventy or seventy-five years old. She is maybe three tables away from where I sit, facing towards me. She keeps looking through the huge glass windows that form the venue's arched wall, peeping down the pedestrianised road that leads to the town's high street. She asks a member of cafe staff what time is it? Just gone ten

o'clock. Oh, she must be on her way. Must have got stuck in River Island or something. The slightly anxious waiting continues. The woman is excited, or nervous, or both.

A few minutes later another woman of maybe forty years old comes into the cafe with shopping bags. It turns out she got stuck in Debenhams, not in River Island. She seems disgruntled, and greets the older woman briefly, unsmilingly, not meeting her with the same loving, excited energy. I decide they are mother and daughter. Daughter orders at the bar, dealing with the encounter on a practical basis, what needs to be ordered have you finished your tea do you want a scone? Mother sits slightly awkwardly, waiting, smiling. Once Daughter is seated I watch the conversation, notice how Mother is chatting always, how Daughter looks away and at her phone, talks less. I feel very sad. My own mother did not live to seventy; I did not get to meet her for scones in theatre cafes for very long. I remember this feeling that my mother was a slight irritation, a bit of a burden, someone I had to meet rather than wished to meet, and imagined my own mother waiting for me if I were to be late, feeling excited to see her firstborn child and only daughter who then wanders in tardily and can't be bothered. I sit in the cafe and feel huge sorrow that I was not kinder, not more thoughtful, not more present to the fact that this person loved me and I loved her and she would probably die before me and I should be better to her.

I should meet her fully. I wanted to shout across the cafe be nice to her! She was waiting for you and you were late, you ungrateful woman! She loves you! Talk to her! Look her in the eye! Enjoy her! I find myself overwhelmed with grief, teary, heavy, foggy. Work is impossible.

Work is also a refuge from this part of life that is certainly not work. Grief is not work. It cannot be work. Mourning can be work—there's even a word for a professional mourner, a

'There was a crack and a whoosh and I was smacked back, winded, onto the doorstep' (6).

'...lint, flack, gack-pack-nack, the whole place was heavy mourning, every surface dead Mum, every crayon, tractor, coat, welly, covered in a film of grief. Down the dead Mum stairs, plinkety plink curled claws whisper, down to Daddy's recently Mum-and-Dad's bedroom' (9).

'Look at that, look, did I or did I not, oi, look, stab it. Good book, funny bodies, open door, slam door, spit this, lick that, lift, oi, look, stop it' (11).

moirologist—but grieving, the emotional processing after a loss, is not work, despite the enormous expenditures of energy, physical and psychical. It is clearly not productive: it can't produce any economic value for the grieving. Neither is it really reproductive; it doesn't help but rather hinders the continuation of human life. Grief is a form of love between the present and the absent that has no socially or personally reproductive aspect: it is not love that produces bonds with the beloved and missed on which anything else depends. Grief just is. As artists and thinkers and writers of all sorts have unfolded at length, grief cannot be chosen: it's not possible to contain it, to direct it, to make space and time for it in a controllable way. Even tactics like bereavement counselling go only so far, perhaps preventing negative spill elsewhere to a degree but certainly not ever managing to hold all of a person's grief in an hour's session once a week. Where the spaces, places, and organisations of work mould life—the perceptions, actions, decisions of a person—in something of a modular way (this goes there, in that place I do this, in this chunk of time that happens), grief overrides these temporal and spatial configurations with fluidity. This fluidity is not just that of waves, sweeping over a life and stopping it breathing for a moment or swallowing it up and then subsiding, the most common metaphor for moments of grief. The fluids can be of different sorts: the drip-drip-dripping of a broken gutter staining a wall; the crawly seeping of a leaky bucket; the dropping torrent of a waterfall; or even the sticky weeping of a something more viscous, like snot from a nose.

'For a souvenir, for a warning, for a lick of night in the morning.

For a little break in the mourning. I will give you something to think about, I whispered. He woke up and didn't see me against the blackness of his trauma (10)'.

'Oil, when you look closer mud, when you look closer sand, when you sip it, silt becoming silk' (50).

On Tuesday 20 June 2017 the grief is like a plunge pool: cold, shocking. The whole body at once. Palpitations. Prickly skin. Numbness. In this feeling-state I pack up my things and go downstairs to the Workshop. The three core performers are working there, warming up, and let me know that they're not finished with the planned tasks for various practical reasons. They are answerable to me and the relationship calls for this

'Grief felt fourth-dimensional, abstract, faintly familiar. I was cold' (4).

reporting, which I cannot receive. I nod and sit down and reopen my computer. As they finish up their work, I hover in my state, and, when they begin to set up for the next part of the rehearsal I relay my story about Mother and Daughter. I am very, very sad but trying, I remember, to be analytical and composed. I'm not sure why. The tears come and, with them, Amanda and Viki, hugging me. I apologise, I think. It seems aberrant to allow this part of life—my life, but also the life of the world, the life of other people not working but just doing life, adjacent to us as we work—into the room. And yes, at this point I am working: I am in the workroom, the Workshop, no less, with my workmates. My grief before them and their caring response to me tangles work and life together in a complicated way. My emotional energies would not have been released here if I had not felt that life could seep into the workspace in this manner; I have experienced stronger moments of grief during collaborative workdays and have felt it without expressing it visibly or audibly. This working environment seemed to permit this leaking.

> 'But I care, deeply. I find humans dull except in grief…Motherless children are pure crow. For a sentimental bird it is ripe, rich and delicious to raid such a nest' (16).

This leaking is not dissimilar to that for which I was sent out of warm-ups. I seem unable, at certain moments, to prevent myself from telling stories, following trains of thought associatively or argumentatively or analytically, gossiping, or asking questions. Once these lifeful topics, or, really, this lifeful mood enters the space, it is enormously difficult to cut through it and revive a working tone. This is no more the case, I would suggest, with visible grief than it is with a complaint about a bad meal the previous night. It's as if the life-tone really is bigger than the work-tone, but it's also more tender, more vulnerable, making it socially and perhaps psychologically difficult to put a stop to it once it has begun. It's also more seductive, exciting; it's rich and fun versus the domain of work. And this is work that I like, work that I choose, work that I want to do! But as soon as this place

> 'My friend said, You have to stop thinking this way, involving her. There's grief and there's impractical obsession' (51).

is the place of work and this time is the time of work and these people are the people of work they stand aside from being part of life in the same way, and life mustn't touch them too much. To maintain the possibility of working—which is what we are here to do, my collaborators and I—life can't come in.

Nevertheless, working together has produced some life between us. The four of us, by this stage in the process, are close. Amanda and Kit are wife and husband, so that is perhaps to be expected. Apart from Kit and Viki, prior to *Recreation* we had all known one another in various ways. Amanda had been a dance teacher when Viki and I were growing up dancing in Newcastle, and the two of them especially spent many hours in the studio together. When I was starting in choreography Amanda was a more senior artist, and we often petitioned for support from local organisations together. Amanda, then, was the Arts Council England Relationship Manager for dance in the region, so she knew my work from a funder's perspective. She suggested in a meeting once that Kit, whom I'd met because Amanda and Kit lived near me and let me use their scanner when I needed it for a project, might be a good person to take on tour with another show that needed technical sound support. I had met Viki when she was a youth dancer and I was working in a Newcastle arts organisation, and, later, when I was a producer in London, she turned up for an internship interview with one of my colleagues, and subsequently became part of the team for a period. Kit and Amanda themselves met through their professional lives, taking part in a project which involved musicians and dancers working together. Our broader lives, our histories together and apart, already ooze into the project with shared experiences and memories.

Though we knew one another before the project began, it was the work itself that created the possibility for this leaking of life into work, creating tiny holes in the fabric of our relationships

'Oh, I said, we move. WE FUCKING HURTLE THROUGH SPACE LIKE THREE MAGNIFICENT BRAKE-FAILED BANGERS, thank you Geoffrey, and send my love to Jean.

Moving on, as a concept, is for stupid people, because any sensible person knows grief is a long-term project. I refuse to rush. The pain that is thrust upon us let no man slow or speed or fix' (99).

that allowed for our separate lives, or something of a temporary shared life to seep through. There is a high probability of this in many artistic projects, as the strains and joys over many intensive weeks in the studio facilitate a real intimacy; many of the activities undertaken in a rehearsal studio look like or perhaps are even the same things that happen in corporate teambuilding scenarios. In addition, we were travelling to different rehearsal venues around the country, living together outside of the studio in some cases. I do think, though, that there were particularities to this project, to the content of the action in the studio, which advanced this sense of admission or permission. Nothing in this project was confessional: this is not the kind of dance-theatre project that trades on the personal lives, the stories, the traumas or delights of its performers. But the performers were asked to consider, for example, the types of activities they undertake in their non-work life, to examine meditatively those domains, and to feed back something of their experience. We did improvised dances that pushed into the fat tissues of the body, or that invoked private sexual activity, or that involved the touch of another driving sensation. We sang together, a lot. It is on the basis of this content that our personal lives emerged to one another: in a one-on-one rehearsal for Amanda's solo section, she went past her usual cheerful professionalism to admit that she had been struggling with her mental health, and, in the daily drives to ARC during a rehearsal period, Viki and I discussed our romantic woes. This wasn't designed in advance but sort of arrived at, slowly. Like our work, which, though sharing characteristics of the cognitive, affective, contemporary labouring of our time, goes beyond these aspects of each person to include and even intertwine with the physical, all those tactile and sensate and frankly smelly, clumsy, sweaty, bodily bits of us. Our life together, based on our work together, is vivid and whole, leaking both ways.

This culture of life-ing together is thrown into relief each time

'The friends and family who had been hanging around being kind had gone home to their own lives. When the children went to bed the flat had no meaning, nothing moved (4)'.

'The doorbell rang and I braced myself for more kindness. Another lasagne, some books, a cuddle, some little potted ready-meals for the boys. Of course, I was becoming expert in the behaviour of orbiting grievers. Being at the epicentre grants a curiously anthropological awareness of everybody else; the overwhelmeds, the affectedly lackadaisacals, the nothing so fars, the overstayers, the new best friends of hers, of mine, of the boys. The people I still have no fucking idea who they were. I felt like the Earth in that extraordinary picture of the planet surrounded by a thick belt of space junk. I felt it would be years before the knotted-string dream of other people's performances of woe for my dead wife would thin enough for me to see any black space again, and of course—needless to say—thoughts of this kind made me feel guilty...'(4).

someone comes to join us, which is often. This is most evident when we are co-leading our weekly public workshop-cum-open rehearsal, and, most of all, when we are with the two guest performers at the end of each week. Here, we are working. We are the working team, and the others there have some other sort of status. Amanda doesn't call Kit 'honey'. I do not discuss my grief, however present it might be. We plug the leaks of life into work as work slices into life again, determining the edges of proper behaviour, sealing ourselves as best we can.

'I explained that Crow would violate, illustrate and pollute Ted's work. It would be a deeper, truly wild analysis, a critical reckoning and an act of vengeance. It would be a scrapbook, a collage, a graphic novel, a dissolving of the boundaries between forms because Crow is a trickster, he is ancient and post-modern, illustrator, editor, vandal...' (107).

Sabbath

CJ is a poet. Google him, as I did, and you will find that he has published a book of Christian poetry.

CJ's a Christian. He does not tell me this directly but because I have Googled him I know. I want to talk to him about it, to raise it explicitly. Mostly this is because I also practise within an organised faith system and somehow I want to think that he would like that, even though I have no evidence for it, and do not know him. I want to tell him that I meditate most days, that it is a special place I have found that is productive in many ways but is not work. I want to tell him how surprised I am to find that I, a secular atheist of Dawkinsesque vigour, turn up at least once a week at a Buddhist centre almost wherever I am in order to hear the Dharma and spend time with other Buddhists. I want to tell him how I think that all spiritual traditions share some common practices, like silence, confession, aesthetic ritual, generosity, and how I think that maybe these are things that we just *need* as human beings to be anything but entirely miserable and self-involved. I don't say anything. Not everybody's as impressed with me as I am with myself, I hear myself say to myself.

There are rituals to end and begin sacred moments, sacred timespaces in which other things can happen. This needn't be the sacrality of religion—this timespace could be secular—but there are always certain things to be done, said, heard, smelt, moved, touched, and even tasted which mark the beginnings and endings of things which we might find important; political theorist Bonnie Honig describes this as 'a dense cultural sensorial synagogue that acts to wrest humanity or sacredness from the creaturely world of the everday' (2015:469)...

CJ is one of the two guest performers for the preview, in-progress version of *Recreation*, presented at Yorkshire Dance, Leeds. I have sent him a pack of information about the show, which included a description of each of the sections of the work as I understood it at the time, a few weeks before the final patch of rehearsals. Much of this was speculative, of course, for I didn't and couldn't know how the drafts and sketches would proceed to form a performance. Some of it mentions meditation, for what I did know about the performance is that it would have something of this quality, or I wanted it to. It did at this stage, and does in the completed version, include a long text to which the audience listen at the opening of the show, which could be seen as some kind of meditative visualisation. In an email, CJ writes:

'Just to confirm-the meditation bit has no religious element right?' [sic]

And I respond:

'None of the performance is religious, no. I've attached a draft version for you to check (it will likely change at least a bit).'

At the end of the public workshop in which CJ participated, I asked each participant to write down a word they associated with the term 'recreation' in order to begin a discussion. CJ wrote down 'sabbath'. He is enthusiastic about this connection, and so am I. My father and his family are mostly secular Jews living in Israel, where I was born. In Israel, the sabbath is observed nationally, though this is changing and is dependent on the place in the country. Still, in most places, there is little or no public transport, many shops and amenities are closed, and things feel very quiet. On Friday afternoon, before the sabbath arrives, there is already a special feeling as people are mostly off work and either spending time with friends and family or, depending on their religiosity, preparing for the sabbath to

> ...I don't know what is done around Christian special days; I'm not and have never been a Christian. I know that in Judaism even many secular Jews will host some kind of special meal at the arrival of the Sabbath, maybe eating or saying or drinking special things. There is a parallel to the start and end of retreats in the Buddhist tradition in which I practice, where a dedication ceremony starts the period and a ritual, often involving a fire and ending in a chant, will close the events. These things are not exclusive to religious people. I wonder if a secular version might be a beer at the airport before going on holiday.

come in. As the sun sets, the new day is here, and families and friends, religious or not, gather to eat together. Over the coming 24 hours, Israelis relax, see people, eat together, walk, perhaps take a trip into nature. Unlike a British weekend, these days are much less likely to include shopping, drinking, children's activities, cleaning the car or DIY. Though fewer and fewer Jews observe—everyone I know still cooks and turns the light on—there is still a feeling of sabbath.

The activities are nothing special, when I come to think of it. There's nothing particular about eating with my family, or taking a nap, or visiting a friend. Doing it on the sabbath, though, gives each a certain colour, a warm energy, an intensity. It's just doing life, but even more so. It's life with space, without the rub of work right by it. There's no guilt in not working; it's the sabbath. Just one day a week to do these things which are only life, and not work. The earth's turnings offer a clear beginning and end: as the sun comes down on Friday it begins its restful rotation, and when it disappears once more on Saturday evening the world is returned to its usual, workful state.

CJ's conjuring of the sabbath tells me much about his perspective on the workshop, and perhaps indeed on the project as a whole. The workshop was attended by a range of people: the daughter of a Leeds-based socially-engaged artist, who also turned out to be a friend of one of my cousins, a couple of regular participants who had taken part in Juncture (see Chapter 4), a handful of local dance students, a dance artist, and five or six members of an older people's arts group in the city.
I knew very few of them before they walked through the door.
In the workshop, we did a number of activities. After introducing the project and dealing with administration of University consent forms, we started with a physical warm-up, using a score adapted from a workshop exercise by American performance artist Keith Hennessy, part of which involves spontaneously

Giorgio Agamben's writing on the sabbath is that which returns in bibliographies related to the term, and his writing begins with a Jewish take on the concept. For Agamben, the sabbath, the Jewish Shabbat or Shabbas, is not simply an extra bit of time added to the workweek, but a special time which exists in both continuity and heterogeneity with the six days that precede it in each cycle (2011:109). The sabbath sits in a 'relationship of proximity and almost reciprocal immanence' with work and inoperativity (110). The sabbath and inoperativity, that state which is the other side of the coin to potentiality (Prozorov 2014), are neither consequences nor preconditions for one another (Agamben 2011). Instead, inoperativity 'coincides with festiveness itself in the sense that it consists precisely in neutralizing and rendering inoperative human gestures, actions, and works, which in turn can become festive only in this way' (Agamben 2011:109). In this sense, inoperativity is connected to the kind of life that I am searching for in this chapter, in these accounts, a state that includes the potential for human endeavour without the necessity for its exercising, not a suspension of labour precisely, but a 'temporary suspension of productive activity', regardless of the realm of that productivity (economic, domestic, etc.) (Honig 2015:478).

improvising a ‘folk dance’ with or without partners. The core performers led a vocal warm-up and taught the group some of the vocal work included in the show, which leads to the composition of what we call a ‘spell’, including some arm movements. We had the group create sculptures of themselves in relation to parts of the set, which was installed ready for the performance, and then make compositions in groups to show others. We did some spooning, an elaborate group cuddle. We chatted, and we laughed. It was very relaxed (apart from for me, when the PA wouldn’t play music from any of my devices). Though I’m fairly sure that these were relatively new actions for most, none of these activities, it appeared, seemed particularly unusual to anyone; nobody expressed concern or discontent. There was a sense of pottering along, doing a bit of this and then a bit of that. It was special kind of hanging out, made special not necessarily by its contents but rather its container—a choreography, a dance studio, a group, a workshop. Like the sabbath, its quality came not from being necessarily in contrast to something outside of it—it was squeezed in, pressed—but rather the outside being absent raised it up to something simultaneously more energised and more slackened. Just like the sabbath, the workshop was a manifestation of an elevated everyday, usual and unusual at the same time.

It strikes me that the workshop is a way of practising the Sabbath, in the way that Honig suggests (2015). She proposes that there exists a sabbath-power which emerges from festive inoperativity, through which new forms of relation are possible. The sabbath-power is enacted through practice, a practice of the senses. In the workshop we use at least four of the five usual senses (taste is usually excluded), but also others: we use proprioception and balance, we feel one another’s body heat, and more mysterious things, like sensing another’s feeling of comfort or discomfort in coming into contact with them. Honig’s sabbath-power seems strong; a force. Thinking it in practice allows it to become much more subtle, it permeating, rather than charging, through a space and time.

CJ is tall and thin, long-limbed. His skin is dark and his hair short atop a round, smiling face. He has big eyes and a glowing smile, displayed only occasionally. He’s handsome. I can’t tell how old he might be: to my estimation it could be anything between 25 and 35 years old.

I watch CJ rehearse a section of the performance we call ‘The Mermaids’. In this part of the work, the performers sit in a line across the stage, starting at stage left and reaching almost to

the other side of the square we tape onto the floor for each performance for both spacing and design reasons. Each performer assumes a mermaid-like pose. The main points of contact with the floor are outer hip and palm, as their legs gently stretch away from their torso with a bend in the knee. Earlier in the process the posture was held upright, rigid, with the upper chest and chin lifted, legs glued together from hip to toe. I wanted the section to appear composed; to my mind something of the taut musculature surrounding a skeleton that appeared to assume a relaxed position possessed something of the faux-chill of twentieth century pin-ups. Later, this showbusiness reference seemed unimportant, so now the formation of the five performers, plus the transition from a previous section which involves more static composition, holds together a softer way of being: the chests cave slightly, the performers search for the fattiest, fleshiest bit of themselves on which to rest, the corners of the shoulders twist towards the supporting arm, the feet cross or separate.

Just as '[p]resents, gifts and toys are objects with use and exchange value that are rendered inoperative, wrested from their economy' (Agamben 2011:111), so are these postures recuperated from a state of high charge. Their economy should be one of dance, their value coming from stage dance's traditional values of poise, strength, skill, and virtuosity, but the dancerly frame drops out of operativity in this sense in favour of the sensorial. In the practice of sabbath-power choreography changes on a level of quality rather than shape. Just as the sabbath can contain the same tasks as the workweek, so can the choreography retain its normative values, but the alteration is visible as a result of the suspension of the productive. In movement this shows.

CJ finds this pose easily, his length folding without resistance. He looks comfortable. From this position he begins the score, which lasts about twenty minutes:

1. Settle into your posture. Nestle. You may change positions throughout the section by rotating over the back of your pelvis to face the opposite direction, so the other hip and hand take your weight. You can pause with both hands on the floor behind you and knees bent if you like. Please don't shuffle.

2. Keeping your eyes soft and moving naturally, start to sing voicelessly the song that you chose.

3. When you have done that for a while, you can alternate between this mouthing and singing the song with your free

arm.

4. When you have done that for a while, you can move between mouthing, moving your arm and singing the song with your spine. Remember forward-backward-left-right-up-down-twist.

Singing the song with different parts of the body is what we call 'cantabile dancing', cantabile meaning 'in a singing style'. The core cast and I have been working on this practice for six months, on and off, learning to be increasingly accurate with rhythm and tone as well as inventive with the physical possibilities offered by arms and spines. It is trickier than it seems; it requires an absolute dedication to the vocal line to avoid simple grooving around. It requires a deep listening and concentration without mentally or physically retreating. When I watch him do The Mermaids score for the first time, CJ has tried this cantabile dancing for half an hour at most. His eyes dart around, checking the others. It's as if I can see his thought-bubble popping up, hovering over him, asking 'am I doing this right?'. The truth is, nobody is doing it quite right. I'm not sure I know what right is until I see it, and the rightness is predicated on the whole, on everyone doing it more or less right, or right in different ways, until the whole is right. CJ doesn't stick out as doing it wrong so much as it is clear that something CJ is doing is knocking the whole thing out of shape.

A sabbatical texture is one of being in the present, mindful of what is happening and what is being done. The sabbath's actions are not in preparation for any future or the fallout of any past, but are undertaken within the sabbath itself. Work, particularly project work, conducts itself always towards a future: a project is a projection (Bayly 2013; Wikström 2016).

The projectness I experience is the busyness Agamben suggests is the human race's answer to our very sabbatical nature: '[h]uman life is idle and aimless, but it is precisely this lack of action and aim which makes possible the incomparable busyness of the human race. Man has devoted himself to production and labour because he is in essence deprived of work, because he is above all a sabbatical animal' (2007:138).

But I am too full, too busy, too thinking about comps and backdrop-steaming and thank you cards and schedules and documentation and when will we eat tomorrow for god's sake to do anything about it. I am cornered by the projectness of the project and can feel all these things rubbing up against me, stimulating my skin and preventing me from doing the work of direction, from doing the work of supporting these people who are offering their efforts to a thing that is called mine. Work and

life don't collide, but work and work do. Viki steps in. Viki's way of stepping in is to find an off-moment, a break, a gap in the schedule where I have to talk to the lighting designer or find out where our tape has gone, to sidle into the topic.

'Yeah, so when I do that section I think about really singing. It helped me to keep singing the song over and over. What's your song?'

CJ shyly shares his song with Viki. It's a song about prayer, sung by a woman country singer. It turns out to be a favourite of Amanda's, and we have used it before. It's a difficult song for this task because the tone is smooth and quiet, but the rhythm is oddly broken-up and staccato.

Viki plays the song through the PA system and starts to work with CJ. Kit joins in, and Amanda sings. Lauren, the other guest performer, watches with a smile. The studio feels lighter, the sound filling the large square space. The song is beautiful, and I think we are all enjoying it. There are many things happening all at once: snacking and laughing and singing and dancing and sitting and standing and reading texts and chatting. The only reason this is happening is because it is work and a break from work at the same time. It feels lifeful, vivid, and I realise now that that is what life is, somehow, or at least is in this story. It is the very simultaneous existence of many things, not because there is some sort of efficiency measure delivered by multitasking, but because there is no task whatsoever. When there is no task we human beings still do stuff, that's what this moment in the studio seems to whisper or state or shout. We do still do stuff.

We do still work. Viki initiated the exercise not because she, strictly speaking, needed to. She did so because she cares about the work she's doing, not because it is work and she's being paid for it or gaining some other kind of personal

This is the true feeling of sabbath. This when actions that could be done anytime are done with a relationship to the productive potentials of work without realising those potentials. The activity of work—and even its site—has not changed, or not changed much, but this reframing of the space and time as one of a break—a sabbath or sabbatical—allows for 'the liberation of the body from its utilitarian movements, the exhibition of gestures in their pure inoperativity' (Lucian in Agamben 2011:111). This makes it possible, paradoxically, for something that could be called an important part of the rehearsal process to occur as part of a break. I think it is *Recreation* itself, its interests and agendas and methods, that allow this suspension to occur.

advantage, but just because she does. CJ could have also taken a break, and Kit, and Amanda, and Lauren: they could have gone out and smoked a cigarette or whatever people do to get out of a room now that hardly anyone smokes. They continued to work in a way that didn't feel like work but was one of many kinds of things that can happen. This wasn't so much life and working rubbing together but many sorts of human capacity being activated and even enjoyed all at once, not rubbing together but rubbing along together. There is a comfortable jostle, touching and pressing and pushing but with delight and pleasure, with plenty of space for everything.

Later in the day, I watch the five performers repeat The Mermaids. CJ's got it, now, he really has. But something weird is happening: his eyes are rolling back and his jaw is becoming slack and his neck is folding, chin rising out and up. This is odd, unfathomable. Did he read something into the instructions that I didn't intend? Did someone say something about taking on a certain mode of being when I wasn't in the room? No, I realise later, it's not that. CJ is *exhausted*. As he is performing The Mermaids he is dropping off, catching himself, then repeating. It takes me quite a long time to work this out, and am not even sure of my own conclusion until later when I discuss it with Viki. Was I really seeing what I was seeing? Is CJ so tired because of what we have been doing in the studio, I wonder, or because of things entirely outside of our shared actions: does he have a job working shifts, or is he studying late into the night? Does he have children who keep him up or does he have an addiction to video games? I can't face raising the question with him: it feels intrusive to solicit any kind of information about the deeply intimate realm that is rest. I choose to take it positively: here is a place where life has been let in, even if it's squeezing into the tiny fragments of space within the work itself.

Agamben doesn't use the common phrase 'day of rest' to describe the sabbath, but Honig, writing through Agamben's work, does so several times in one article, even playing in her writing with rest and wrest as homophones. I don't know where I stand on this. It seems to rather suppress Agamben's assertions about the sabbatical as inoperative, as unrealised potential; is the potential still present when the being is only semi-conscious? I come to two thoughts: either rest, particularly sleep, is so personal as to not belong to the political project of the sabbath, which always involves others; or rest is still so associated with recuperation from the last workday and preparation for the next that it cannot be sabbatical proper.

CJ has a request.

'Ummmmm, Gillie, yeah, I ummmmm have a job interview tomorrow at 12.30. So, I errrrr wondered if we could take lunch around then, so I could do it in my lunch break.'

'What? What the actual fuck?! Tomorrow is show day. Do you know what that means? That means we're going to do a show, in front of people, in front of people who have bought tickets. This is my work! I'm paying you. I don't care about your future job. Right now you're working for me. *This* is your job. Tomorrow I need you all day, and we haven't decided on the schedule yet so I don't know when we'll take lunch. Check your contract and you'll see. You've agreed to this. You signed; you consented. Your interview is

not

my

problem.

Sort it out.'

I didn't say this. I wanted to say this.

Such terrible friction. Friction between one person's work and another. My work, this work, is my real work. It is extra-real because I have money to do it, or that's how it turns out that I feel. It is the main thing I do. It is the most visible thing I do. It is what I tell people I do when they ask me what I do. I take it seriously. I am proud of it. It is my work.

My work is CJ's 'weird thing I did once'. Two and a half days shyly hanging out with people he does not know and most likely

To my mind, this creation of a sabbatical landscape, a way of being together that suspends, as Agamben suggests, work and inoperativity in proximity to something festive like the sabbath, should be enough for anyone. CJ's request represents the privilege of the sabbath, the fact that to take time out of the productive is not necessarily available to all people equally, however you cut it; there are material conditions in which people have to operate which prevent sabbaticals.

will not meet again. Lying down. Chatting. Singing. Trying on pastel-coloured sweatshirts and jogging bottoms, uncomfortable in an outfit of baby pink. His work, his real work, is what he hopes to get through the job interview.

From my viewpoint, this is work and CJ's interview is some other part of his life, something fluffy and far-away. I don't know what the interview's for; I know little of his life beyond a few titbits here and there. I can't see clearly the contours of his life outside this context, my context, my working context. From CJ's viewpoint, the interview is work, or at least the prospect of it, and *Recreation* is some other part of life, something fluffy and far-away not in actuality—he is in the room—but perhaps in terms of purpose. CJ doesn't know what the performance is for; he knows little of the work of choreographers or choreographies like these beyond a few titbits here and there.

These two truths come into contact through a question, a request, and they rub. There's no way for both to exist together: the two truth-objects meet and jostle. Without the lubrication of polite congeniality they would bash and knock, pressing and moving as each tries to make space for itself. Even with social grease the two press and move, almost sparking but ultimately reaching an impasse. The pressure is too much. I cave.

And it does feel like caving, like I must give up something hard-won. It doesn't take much to break through the thin veneer of bravado and showwomanship and pathetic internet activism that protects my work as work, as work in all the senses that I'd like it to have: that it has value, that I deserve credit for it, social and monetary, that it is necessary, that I am doing it because it has to be done, not just because I like it, or, worse, that something in my heart demands that I do it. I've never been much of that sort, the one who can't not do art. I have to confess, here, that maybe my work doesn't matter in these ways, that maybe

work doesn't matter in these ways, and that, for someone, for CJ, this is just a thing that people do and not really work. It bothers me.

I see in this interaction another sort of friction. This friction is private, hidden most of the time even to me. As *Recreation* and this thesis are in many ways one and the same thing, or at least the Venn diagram involving each is composed more of overlap than remainder, the development of my ideas in each touches everything else. Throughout the process I have been very concerned with being 'ethical', not always remembering that ethics is a living process, not the firm lines of morality. For instance, I made a point of always paying everyone as equally as I could figure out how to do so; exceptions include my producer's standard rate, still very low for her experience, skill, and the extent to which this kind of arts worker is sought after, and one of my collaborators, whose payment came from a specific funding source whose terms determined the fee. I made start and end points of days very clear and never asked performers to work late or extra. For much of the process I made the days one hour shorter than usual, because I wanted to acknowledge the extra time my collaborators worked in sending emails, thinking about what had happened in the studio, and supporting marketing efforts. My idea was that this protected everyone's lives from the abrasion of work, that I would be doing the right thing if work was made fair and tidy. This way each worker's life could be enlarged or at least sustained whilst working with me. In CJ's request my authority to make this space is taken away, and my neat division of work and life is brought into question. That is, my ethics are brought into question. If all my reading and writing and thinking and talking and planning and dancing is directed towards an ethics of life, of life that is valued for its lifefulness, not for its usefulness along productivist lines, then surely the interaction might have gone like this:

The sabbath has its own ethics, its own political charge. This is not about making work better for the worker, but in coming into contact with productivism and seeing what else is there by stepping through it. Honig writes: 'we see here a practice that has some family resemblance to the idea of the General Strike: a suspension of work that presupposes the productive power of workers, but also generates the generative powers that may open new and different orders of economic life' (2015:474). I'm inclined to disagree, for a strike presents itself as a temporary state through which, indeed, economic imaginaries can proliferate and cause change, but ultimately the impact remains within that sector of human action. Sabbatical inoperativity, on the other hand, has the potential to open up other orders completely, ones where deeds and words occur for lifeful purposes unrelated to economics.

‘Ummmmm, Gillie, yeah, I ummmmm have a job interview tomorrow at 12.30. So, I errrrr wondered if we could take lunch around then, so I could do it in my lunch break.’

‘Oh! Sure.’

Or:

‘Ummmmm, Gillie, yeah, I ummmmm have a job interview tomorrow at 12.30. So, I errrrr wondered if we could take lunch around then, so I could do it in my lunch break.’

‘Oh! Yeah, OK. What’s the interview for?’

Or any other number of other responses that would respect CJ’s life, including his own personal intertwining of life and work. Instead, my mind raced to a response—which I, luckily, did not verbalise—which tells of another, totally opposite point of view. It exposes the fact that in trying to protect life, as manifested in the lives of my collaborators, another agenda is fulfilled: it protects work. It protects work as work, its productivity, its transactionality, its legality. It protects me as the boss. One way in which I understand this is to despair: I don’t want to be that woman I don’t want to protect labour I don’t want to be a boss I don’t want to think that if I am the boss I own the workers their lives their time their energies their thoughts I don’t want to be responsible for perpetuating this charade that work is the most important thing ever ever ever I don’t want to I don’t want to. But despite my interest and education I find myself indoctrinated into this purview, shackled to work’s domineering associations. It’s unavoidable. My intellectual and ethical stance has not, it seems, taken me beyond the sticky rubbing together of life and work.

In the end, midst my momentary internal chafing, I hedge:

Honig writes that ‘[i]n the sabbatical state of exception all divisions are meant to disappear, rather than to be (re)inscribed’ (2015:473). In the conversation I am describing to the left our social divisions becoming blurred. In conventional terms I am the boss and CJ is the worker; his asking to take time out of what is contracted work is a challenge to this relationship, to this instance of power and control. But CJ’s understanding of what is happening is that it is a form of sabbath, in which ‘the laws of social division are suspended and everyone is a king’ (Honig 2015:473). For us together to maintain our collective practice of the sabbath it was necessary for me to meet this challenge with what then felt like capitulation, and what now feels like a reasonable—and even desirable or ‘enchanted and enchanting’—pursuit of the sabbatical (Honig 2015:474).

‘Um yeah, I guess we could do that. I mean, on show days we try to start later and break later, that’s all. But I guess if you’ve got to go you’ve got to go. What time do you need to leave?’

An Indefinite Article

These are stories, of sorts, glimpses into what has been a complex, lengthy and rich process. As these stories demonstrate, this process is both particular to itself, its conditions, its environments and its characters, and is, in some ways, no more particular than any other artistic process, context of work, personal project or encounter between people. I have looked for moments that seemed to me to want to be thought about in terms of life and work, and have tried to describe them and their effects. As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, there would be no way to write in such a way that would encompass the whole project and its possible lifefulnesses: even the three accounts given are incomplete. They are also diverse enough to demonstrate that this is, of course, no Instagram lyf: the lifefulness of this project is not contained by the fact that it is a project, something that seems controlled, organised, sealed by its beginning-and-end nature; it is bigger and stranger than a neat pattern, neatly analysed.

This echoes Kathi Weeks’ brief discussion of the indefinite article ‘a’ in the phrase ‘getting a life’ (2011:232). In this paragraph, she insists that this word in this phrase suggests that there are different lives to get, that getting a life does not determine the contents of that life. She draws on Deleuze to speak of a life of singularities not individualities, a description that applies readily to the three aspects of *Recreation*’s creation about which I have written here. I believe what I have written speaks of ‘a life that is common to and shared with others without being the same as theirs’ (Weeks 2011:232). I think I have been writing about my

life, a life that is mine, that includes this project but also many other things with which this project interacts: my friendships, my emotions, my habits of thought, my imagination. These things are not my work, they are my life, or, to continue to follow Weeks, 'qualities that [I am] urged toward' (2011:232). And of course something like a quality can't be mine, cannot be possessed, cannot 'be said precisely to own or even to hold' (Weeks 2011:232), let alone fully described and offered as words on a page. A life, Weeks claims, has to be in its 'getting'. In this sense, this chapter is less a description and more a hopeful act of getting, of going back into the past and trawling through something that appears like work to see what life can be got within it, adjacent to it, on top of it, below it, and through it. The chapter is less a description of a life that has been getting itself than the performative getting of a life which was itself being produced passively, or better accidentally, or perhaps better yet as a matter of course. Life is already always there, if I look for it carefully, and it is a life always already more than that of only 'a consumer or worker', as Weeks cautions (2011:232).

This approach, however optimistic, has its limitations. It is historical, looking back at something that did happen with a new lens, investigating its consequences and its interactions with the present. Weeks' invocation is one heading towards the future: 'the activity of 'getting' introduces a temporality to the mandate, one that points toward a different future' (2011:232). Now that it is plain that life is indeed 'a web of relations and qualities of experience' (2011:233) with particular attributes, ones described here through their different sorts of meetings with work, how can this be grown, extended, amplified beyond what already is? Though Weeks is keen to avoid 'burdening life with a fixed content' (2011:233), I think that these webs of relations and qualities of experience can be found in the concrete, the bodily, the sensorial and the relational—and these need not be understood as fixed but dynamic and actualised. I think this chapter has already found ways within these concrete-but-not-fixed accounts to work with, as Weeks says, the deconstructive and the reconstructive, negation and affirmation, the critical and the utopian (2011). But, within this, life and its lifefulness is still set against work and its productivity. In order to get a life that can not only signal its appearance in moments of opportunity, when we're looking really hard, but can escape and flourish and be as excessive as Weeks' calls are, it is not sufficient to look back or even to look. I want to suggest that the webs of relations and qualities of experience that form a life can be exercised, trained, and practised deliberately, just as they were more accidentally in the process of creating *Recreation*. In the following chapter, I will build on the pockets of life unfolded here to consider how these elements are present in activities more readily described as recreational, and how these actions called recreation might be training grounds for the subjectivities needed to create a future in which work is decentralised. I will think through how *Recreation* as a performance

provides some of these methods for inventing, imagining, and trying on the lifeful qualities we need to continue to get a life.

You can view video documentation of the November 2017 presentation of *Recreation* at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, here:

bit.ly/RecreationVideo

Please do that now, before moving on to Chapter 3.

Photograph by Camilla Greenwell

3. On Recreation and *Recreation*

In Chapter 1 I thought about the ways in which the research and development stage of *Recreation* fulfilled and exceeded aspects of contemporary labour. In Chapter 2 I sought to elaborate the appearance of 'life', as opposed to work, as it manifested itself in later stages of the production of the performance. Here, I'd like to develop these ideas in a new direction. I want to retain the sort of heterotopic, forgiving quality that advocating for life against work offers, the possibility of it seeming baseless and slippy, with many layers in four dimensions and more, obfuscating one another just as and just as much as they facilitate one another. It doesn't visualise well, and it shouldn't, this kind of mixed-up stew or slew of colours and textures and temporalities and interconnections that make up what a life could be, maybe should be, maybe is. It makes me think of one of those images from an album cover or Channel 4 drama from the 1990s, in which one person stands still in a cityscape, looking at the camera, while the brightly-coloured, lit-up world encircles them with speed. But that's not quite right, either; in life itself nobody stands still and everyone whirls with everyone else. Even whirling isn't the right thing to say, because that's a four-dimensional movement that is fully comprehensible with a singular human body, and that's not what I'm trying to get to. Whatever this 'life' is, it's exciting, but a difficult place from which to take a stand, to act: proposals toward new forms of life in relation to work just get sucked into life's technicolour whirlpool and drift away or dissolve.

It is this sort of indistinguishability that Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams jostle against in their resistance to what they describe as 'folk politics' in *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work* (2015). In this text they critique Occupy and other grassroots political agents for being unable to create political change, and describe the history of neoliberalism's calculated entry into the normative political sphere in Europe as a method from which the Left, their terrain, must learn. They discuss the deliberate mechanisms neoliberalism's advocates deployed to effectively integrate a new political ideology into mainstream debates, ultimately enabling its normalisation within today's political-economic landscape. In short, Srnicek and Williams claim that the post-work Left must learn to be clearer about what it wants, however presumptuous or incomplete the ask is, and strategically intervene based on that vision. David Frayne, in *The Refusal of Work*,

goes further to say that '[t]hose who resist work…have no overall mission, no public voice, and no real unity beyond their common set of experiences' (2015:227). Kathi Weeks insists upon the demand as the only way in which the nature of work can change, following from the US Wages for Housework campaigns in the 1970s (2011). Demands can be spoken. They are the lynchpin of contemporary politic rhetoric. They can be uttered with force, turned into slogans, cropped and replayed for the radio, and turned into GIFs and memes (as this word is understood now, in 2019). I'm taking it a bit too lightly, of course. I do want contemporary working practices to change, I do want work to be decentralised as the very hook on which our entire personhoods hang, I do want all of us—everyone, everywhere—to have lives that are nourished, safe and fulfilled beyond the exploitation of ourselves through work at the service of wealthy people and institutions under globalised, neoliberal capitalism. I do. I just don't know how to make a demand of that sort. Or perhaps I do, but I hover proximally, nervous to take the step into completely going for it because then I wonder about the space for the imaginary, the speculative, the ongoing, the incomplete, the sensorial, and so on once a demand is made. This space seems essential beyond the demand for a life other than that which is contained by or subsumed within work, in order to produce in the positive an image of what the post-work future might contain, what it might be like, what we might do, how it might feel. I don't think it is the obligation of arts practices to fulfil or even participate in a demand, but I am seeking the kind of response to or interaction with the demand for less work which could signal towards some other qualities or textures of post-work life, which necessarily includes the paradoxes and complexities of such a vision.

Helen Hester and Nick Srnicek, two of the best-known contributors to the discourse around post-work imaginaries, speak in a promotional video for one of the events in the Take Back Control series, a set of conversations about the future of society responding to recent political turbulences. It's very short, but some of the fleeting utterances relay the position of the speakers and some of the dominant views in the discourse more broadly. On the question of whether 'robots will take our jobs', Srnicek responds that we need to prepare for an automated society, for the fact that automation will indeed continue and that the machines will indeed continue to make many forms of human labour obsolete (2017). There will be policy issues with which to contend, regulatory frameworks, legislation. There will be continued technological change, with the need to improve, tailor and remedy issues with the machines we use and will use in an increasingly automated future. But there must also be a cultural shift, in which we each individually and collectively, as a society, reorganise our activities, our modes of being, our relations and our values in order not just prepare for the inevitable but also grow its potential for what we think is good.

In this short presentation, Hester and Srnicek present two potential ways of popularising post-work futures in order that these preparations can be realised. Briefly, Srnicek announces that we must remind people how terrible work is. This is quickly side-lined by a longer elaboration from both speakers about 'reigniting the value of free time', which, according to Hester and Srnicek, is more politically palatable than focusing on the end of work (2017). The free time advocated by Frayne, Hester and Srnicek and others, including André Gorz, to whose thinking I will return, is explicitly time away from work. This free time away from work is based on, largely, a campaign for shorter working hours (just as the Green Party's recent announcement of its commitment to a Free Time Index follows a policy for a four-day working week (Green Party 2018)). The argument for this and the Marxist basis for the case are beyond what is necessary here; it suffices to say that they together argue that most work in our post-Fordist economy—and prior—is undertaken not because humanity requires the products of that labour but because income, identity and social value are produced by work and it is in the benefit of capital and its capitalists to continue to operate in such a way that these are seen to be tethered interminably and even with the notion that this is the natural order of things. Western politicians' calls for 'job creation'—a hollow myth, exposed by even the slightest of thinking—is a regular representation of this delusional ideology. But if we all work fewer hours each week (or, in Gorz's utopia, each month or year or lifetime (1989)), what does this newly-free time look like? What would we do with it? And how would these expanded or created activities produce new or developed forms of subjectivity and relation?

Recreation

In this chapter, I would like to work towards a description of what recreation, as a form of non-work, is or could feel like. In our work-centred society, recreation, like every other attempted categorisation of human life, is positioned as oppositional to or in relation to work. Nonetheless, it can be difficult to carve out this space. On the one hand, as Ivor Southwood and many other writers on contemporary labour have written, it can be thought of as that which we do to advance the possibility of future work, when not currently working, as a new form of work—not recreation after all (Southwood 2011). On the other hand, there can be multiple layers of guilt associated with free time itself, the free time that holds itself open for recreation. As David Frayne describes in *The Refusal of Work* (2015), the responsibility for carving out free time in each life is the responsibility of the individual worker. If the worker hasn't successfully organised themselves to have enough time outside of work then it is their incapacity, their lacking, that has left them short of the requisite free time, under the 'ideological ruse' that is the work-life balance (Gregg 2011:4). Not only

must we work at work, we must also work hard at even *having* free time. Making free time possible has been absorbed into the 'taskification of the world' (Taggart 2017); free time itself is then coloured by its management, with the question 'is this the best use of my time?' hanging over even the possibility of freedom (Taggart 2017).

Even pursuits mostly associated with leisure such as yoga or a pub quiz, and even rest or relaxation, could be seen as another professional development activity, increasing the worker's creativity, concentration and productivity for the benefit of the employer (Cocozza 2017). Art-going fits into this category, too. Further, given that many of the spectators for contemporary, experimental performance—like *Recreation*, for instance—are makers of other contemporary, experimental performance, attending a show is quite literally work, whether it be for networking, market research or creative inspiration. This means that at least some forms of art-going are not a free space to exercise the freedoms of free time, either. Alternative cultural consumption in the form of entertainment does not fully satisfy a recreational opening, either, for, as Gorz describes and Frayne reprises, this exists only to help us to recover and recuperate from overwork so that we can start again (Gorz 1989: 92; Frayne 2015:221). So, none of this satisfies the category 'recreation'. But if it's not any of this, then what are the alternatives? What are they concretely? What will we do in a post-work, recreation-led world?

There are some examples of writers, thinkers and organisations offering suggestions. Scouring through Eva Swidler's 2016 article entitled 'Radical Leisure' in independent socialist magazine *Monthly Review* produces a short list:

grow kitchen gardens
cook at home
walk and bike
hang on the porch chatting
shoot hoops
jam in the basement
tell stories
make music
have friendships
nap in the sun

The independent leftist think tank, new economics foundation (sic), which has produced multiple

reports and propositions regarding the shorter working week and the growth of non-work time, also offers a number of activities they imagine would occur should there be more free time, and outside reproductive labour: 'seeing friends and neighbours, walking, cycling and other kinds of exercise, playing games, making and listening to music, inventing and creating, watching movies and TV, cooking, reading, studying, reflecting, hanging out, doing 'nothing'...' (Coote et al 2010: 23). Despite these attempts to bring the abstract post-work or post-work-centred future into the concrete through naming the actions of which it might be composed, there are multiple difficulties with such definitions. Mareile Pfannebecker and J.A. Smith ask precisely the question 'What Will We Do in the Post-Work Utopia?' in the title of their critique of both Srnicek and Williams' and Frayne's 2015 texts. Part of Pfannebecker and Smith's criticism of the post-work futures which these texts bring forth is that they too closely mirror the non-work, or, in the terms I'm interested in furnishing, recreational lives that closely mirror the needs or desires the activist and academic class of which Srnicek, Williams and Frayne are part. That is to say that for these writers and other post-work thinkers 'the prospect of living between the allotment and the Hegel discussion group might seem idyllic,' that 'work is keeping us from reaching our full human potential, hence the promise that we could all become craft brewers, learn ballet and hold three PhDs' (Pfannebecker and Smith 2016:para 13). As critics of the post-work discourse Frederick Harry Pitts and Ana C Dinerstein suggest, journalists, academics, artists and creatives can easily take up this vision of a post-work future, for it is already reasonably similar to the lifestyles they already inhabit (in Beckett, 2018). This is something of a classist view of recreational activities—and indeed, one as moralistic as the work ethic—which, according to the writers, has necessarily been adopted as a result of the post-work discourse's need to propose 'a more grounded, fulfilling and self-sufficient life' that work can offer in the present or the future (Pfannebecker and Smith 2016: para 9).

Both *Inventing the Future* and *The Refusal of Work* are based on the work of Karl Marx and the contributions of other writers working in the Marxist tradition; Pfannebecker and Smith note that Marx's famous 'hunt in the morning' remark from *The German Ideology* is 'totemic for the post-work movement' (2016: para 10). What the writers note about Marx's statement, though is not so much that this proposal of a post-work future gestures towards the self-determined freedoms which includes productive, reproductive and leisure activities undertaken at liberty, but that Marx is still very much prescribing the very activities, and that those could be considered 'productive enjoyments' rather than other, less determinedly productive activities such as some of those listed by Swidler and the new economics foundation (2016). As soon as post-work writers determine what is to be done when there is no or less work, then, it is either somewhat familiar and a bit unexciting, as in both Swidler's and nef's (sic) offers, or disciplinarian and worthy, as in the case of the

post-workists.

Another approach within the post-work literature is to suggest that it is not necessary to define what a post-work world looks like, what sorts of things we would find ourselves doing. The best post-work activism, which Frayne, after Gorz, describes as the establishment of a politics of time, 'does not seek to enrol people in some pre-planned utopian scheme, but to gradually free them from prescribed roles, furnishing them with the time to become politically active citizens' (Frayne 2015:222). Creating more free or non-work time, then, is seen as the first step in creating the new manners of being, relating and doing that will only be possible under those conditions and that cannot be seen in advance. Though I can see the theoretical, practical and political reasons for taking this view, and can even sense my own excitement, throwing up my hands in a questioning but energised shrug, exclaiming how thrilling it is not to know, I still find it lacking. It's scary to pitch into the unknown. To return to my earlier brief discussion of the demand, it seems to me a natural extension of the concrete nature of the demand for increased free time to demand the space and time to undertake *particular* things, however they are figured or described, and even if they are unrealistic, incorrect or ultimately become replaced by other more desirable or realisable things in the post-work future-to-come. I don't think my dissatisfaction with the haziness of what a post-work world would contain is exclusively mine: Miya Tokumitsu in her article on the fight for free time in American leftist magazine *Jacobin* states that fighting for free time must mean 'thinking more deeply about free time, and how we would spend our lives in a society with many fewer hours on the job' (2017). Despite her resolute demand, she doesn't actually offer anything; her writing exposes the fact that the lists offered by nef and Swidler don't fully satisfy the deep examination for which she is advocating. It is, though, frustrating not to have these writers offer a stronger foothold, a clearer way of projecting and celebrating what could be. It's frustrating to me partially because I would so like these thinkers to give me something, to give me hope. It's also frustrating because I sense the difficulty in articulating the demand for less work, for free time, for autonomy in our activities, for leisure and recreation, to those without post-work as a special interest, to the population at large. Where post-work discourse appears in journalism—one of the major ways in which niche theoretical or activist activity can reach a non-specialist public, along with, I'd like to suggest, the arts—it is equally dissatisfied with the lack of concrete suggestions, as in the recent Long Read on post-work in the Guardian (Beckett 2018). This undermines the potentials of post-work thinking and makes it appear as a reduction, a silly, futile obsession of rich white people in universities who don't understand the terror of the lack of work in its full current manifestation.

In Eva Swidler's approach there is, perhaps, something of a way out. In 'Radical Leisure', she starts

by tracking the relationships between the environmental and labour movements in relation to less work and shorter working weeks, then turning to pre-industrial attitudes to work, or, more importantly, leisure. As in Gorz's *Critique of Economic Reason* (1989), some of which I will use to scaffold much of the thinking later in the chapter, Swidler describes work at the turn of the industrial era, in which some workers in particular roles preferred to work just as much as they needed to satisfy their reproductive necessities, privileging free time above increased living standards in what she describes as the 'leisure ethic', a counter to the more familiar (Protestant) 'work ethic' (Weber 1905). It is this which Swidler would like to revive as a counter to the domination of work and its hold over status, identity, wellbeing, relationships and personal and community sovereignty. The leisure ethic and its living-out are predicated circularly on the creation or intensification of the public sphere outside of work. There needs to be a shared life to which people can turn when work ends, either at the end of the day or the end of a work-centred society. Without this post-work seems impoverished, miserable and anxious. In turn, the commons needs to be made up of those actions that are called leisure. Only when this commons appears does leisure become desirable, humming with alternative values sufficiently established to counter the work ethic. '[W]e need to build, or rebuild,' Swidler proclaims, 'a shared culture of leisure' (2016).

I hear in Swidler's call André Gorz describing, in a simple way, his 'autonomous activities', the final in a schema of three categories into which human activities can fall. Autonomous activities are the things humans do which are neither 'work for economic ends', what we typically call work, nor 'domestic labour and work-for-oneself', which might be known as, in a loose way, social reproduction (1989). In *Critique of Economic Reason*, Gorz describes these three forms of human doing at length and with depth. The appendix to this text is a 'Summary for Trade Unionists and Other Left Activists', presented as a paper at a Trade Union conference in 1986. Due to its designated audience, it is a shorter and somewhat practicable application of Gorz's thoughts in the main part of the text. As such, I take it as a kind of practical direction, which is useful when considering the actualities of what recreation could be in practice. In this section, the three kinds of activity are figured in a manner more descriptive and easier to imagine than in other, more theoretical passages. It seems that Gorz, like Swidler, sees that working class culture already has in it the requisite components of the leisure ethic, that which is needed to have autonomous activities take up more space and time in our lives than those which are driven by outside forces.

Interlude: Methodological Clarifications

Here, in this chapter, I'd like to think about how the performance *Recreation* could be considered to be recreation. My method follows on somewhat from the manner in which I worked in the previous chapter. There, I followed Kathi Weeks to consider the idea of and practice of 'life' in broad brushstrokes, firstly in negation to something I called 'lyf'; through this, life was set in opposition to work. I used anecdotes about particular events and personalities from the production of the *Recreation* to illuminate the appearance of life, and to draw out through in the positive, three interrelated praxes, the ways in which life is separate from but supported, facilitated, squeezed or interrupted by work, and vice versa. Here, life was described as polyvalent, multiple, and somewhat undefinable but for its qualities; it was unfolded as a texture or a set of textures rather than as an abstraction.

In many ways, this chapter is a transformation of this method. It continues to seek out sensible properties of a set of events in order to start to inhabit and nourish an idea, not to produce a cognisable definition but with the aim of an ampler feeling of something. Here I work with recreation, a term, concept or experience which seems to me to have a strange sense of the full and yet empty, in that I think what the various contributions to the topic from the post-work discourse seem to do is already know what it is despite not being able to furnish it much. The thinkers and writers who drift close to recreation in their work seem to avoid looking at it directly, despite its potential helpfulness to the field and indeed to post-work activism. I want to give recreation more space, here, to think it through the practice that is *Recreation* in order to bring it into the concrete.

Thinking about life has been helpful because it broadens the focus and helps to see people as full people, and situations not as this or that thing but as a complex mixture of different ways of being, doing and relating. To think about recreation is to narrow and to focus, refining one aspect of life, an aspect that I think is neglected, dominated or warped by work. It is a part of human experience that could help expand life as a category and a value, informing and enriching what is otherwise always understood in opposition to work. To get to recreation as a concept and as a practice, I'd like to work through the defining qualities André Gorz gives to his category of autonomous activities, articulating this against a different perspective, that of French psychoanalyst and philosopher Christophe Dejours' psychodynamics of work, a clinical and discursive field which appears little in anglophone literature. In so doing, I hope to both critique and elaborate on Gorz's category, refine it and adapt it for my purposes, so that a useful recreational sphere is opened up, in which this particular variety of non-work can reveal its paradoxes, complexities, and conundrums, as well as

its energies, textures and potencies.

Before I get to it, I would like to remark upon the descriptive methods I am again taking up. Following my methodological influences, detailed in the introduction, and the autoethnographic narrative mode deployed in Chapter 2, here I will continue to experiment with detailed description, which here, unlike the previous chapters, focuses on *Recreation* itself, as a *performance*, a cultural artefact, over and above the work as a *process*, but not excluding my history with it in that way. I position myself as the maker-spectator subject that Nicola Conibere so usefully frames in her own practice-as-research PhD dissertation, where I am really watching the work as an audience member, so can assume something shared with others watching, but I know always that I am also the creator of the work (2014:112)—and, indeed, in the case of *Recreation*, that I am also sometimes occupying a cameo role with my vocal contributions. Despite the fact that I wish to foreground and acknowledge my own position as spectator, I am not taking up the enticing opportunity to analyse my own work as a spectator, not diving into the very wide and deep world of thought about the activity of the audience (which in recent times often uses Jacques Rancière's *The Emancipated Spectator* (2008) as its emblem), largely because of the limitations of the length of this writing.

In the descriptions which follow (and their interpretation, analysis, and consideration), I am aware that the operation on the reader is not one of information. This text assumes that either the reader has seen the work before reading these chapters—and, as I suggest in the introduction, that the video documentation is reviewed before reading this particular chapter—or that the reader has not and is not interested in seeing the work. When video documentation is so readily available, the purpose of description must be another one than to render the work visible in the mind's eye. Here, then, it is to support analysis, certainly, but its contribution is also to offer an impression of the work beyond the explanation of what happened. I have tried to write in such a way that the details of the work come together in a form which mirrors and reflects upon the nature of *Recreation* in terms of its formal concerns, its ambience and atmosphere, its soft drone of a tone.

‘Autonomous Activities’ versus the Psychodynamics of Work

It is necessary for me to set up the two sets of ideas I will be working with for the rest of the chapter.

The first, which I have already introduced, is André Gorz’s categorisations of human activity. I appreciate that Gorz was writing in a different era of both capitalism and its theorisation and critique. Nonetheless, I think his thinking on this subject continues to be useful partially because more recent writers in the post-work field continue to use his work, influencing the discourse heavily (most notably Frayne). Despite this use, I do not see post-work writers examining or experimenting with the part of Gorz’s thinking which focuses on non-work activities, and I see this as a discursive gap. So, I turn to Gorz’s ‘autonomous activities’. Though describing them as distinct forms of activity, Gorz himself admits to the overlaps between these categories:

> Indeed, the same activity—bringing up children, preparing a meal or taking care of our surroundings, for example—can take the form of a chore in which one is subject to what seem like the oppressive constraints or of a gratifying activity, depending on whether the activity can be performed at leisure, in co-operation with others and through the voluntary sharing of the tasks involved.
>
> (Gorz 1989: 222–3)

The difference, then, is not only whether they are pleasing or not. Autonomous activities are those ‘which are experienced as fulfilling, enriching, sources of meaning and happiness: artistic, philosophical, scientific, relational, educational, charitable and mutual-aid activities, activities of auto-production and so on’ (Gorz 1989:222). However, there are many varieties of economic or reproductive work which provide one or more of these positive qualities; I am an artist, so my work is oftentimes artistic, and, I hope a source of meaning or enrichment for others as well as for myself. But it is still work. I think the same is true for my friend who is a psychologist, or my brother who is a town planner: they experience fulfilment through activities which are relational and educational and helpful and so on, and that fulfilment may also be experienced by others in proximity to or effected by their activities. It’s still work, in the sense that it is done primarily for economic purposes. In fact, as discussed by David Frayne amongst many other post-work theorists,

contemporary labour is seen as the primary source of pleasure, dignity, and solidarity (2015).

For Christophe Dejours, in his study of the psychodynamics of work, the fact that work can produce these positive experiences is taken further, and celebrated rather than feared. Dejours' vision of work is one in which it provides me, as a worker, the opportunity to 'transform myself, enrich myself, and perhaps even fulfil myself' (2007: 75). Work is associated with enjoyment and emotion and the heightening of the experience of the sensitive, erogenous body (2007). This is not the intimacy to which Melissa Gregg refers, where work saps all joy out of other parts of physical and emotional experience through its interminable encroachment, but work as the site generative of human transformation. This, then, is a considerable overlap with what Gorz sees as distinctly *not* work.

I will note here that Dejours uses a different definition of work than that of Gorz and other writers in the Marxist tradition—and, indeed the conception of work I've been pulling around through previous chapters. Whereas for Gorz work is an economic activity, undertaken within a relation of some form of employment, for Dejours 'work is what is implied, in human terms, by the fact of working: gestures, know-how, the involvement of the body and the intelligence, the ability to analyse, interpret, and react to situations. It is the power to feel, to think, and to invent' (2007: 72). This is clearly a very broad definition, which can include in it so much of human activity as to be unwieldy. He does refine, it, though, going on to say that work is essentially the act of confronting a task which has constraints (2007). This can still include many of the things included as autonomous activities, and indeed in the lists of potential leisure or non-work activities offered above, but in most of the examples Dejours gives he does indeed return to things that overlap more easily with Marxist and popular conceptions of work (factory work, for example). Though they come from different traditions, I think it is useful to read Dejours' concept of work and its affects and impacts against Gorz's autonomous activities in order to open the latter out, to find ways to clarify and test and stretch its possibilities.

For an activity to be autonomous there are further conditions than them offering positive personal experience. Following Greek philosophy and then Marx, Gorz contends that autonomous activities can only occur outside the sphere of necessity. He is careful to make a further, more complex distinction, though. Autonomy stands in opposition to necessity, but it also stands in opposition to heteronomy, action influenced or driven by outside forces. Much of the work in the time in which Gorz was writing, and likely even more so today, is driven not by individual necessity but by a more insidious and confusing kind of social need, determined by all sorts of social and cultural factors.

This heteronomy makes it that

> [w]e are therefore less in thrall to the 'necessities' of existence than to the external determination of our lives and our activity by the imperatives of a social apparatus of production and organization which provides willy-nilly both the essential and the superfluous, the economic and the anti-economic, the productive and the destructive.
>
> (Gorz 1989:166)

The autonomous activities, what I would like to see as a movement towards leisure or recreation, then, are rather difficult to find. They are produced in a double opposition midst a tangle of economic and non-economic, necessary and unnecessary, in a world in which even that which appears autonomous may indeed by heteronomous. It seems to me that the autonomous is not so much a definite category but an approach. If it is possible that bringing up children may be heteronomous, a kind of work-for-oneself or work-for-ourselves, *or* autonomous, gratifying for its own sake, then it is a matter of attitude or perspective as much as an ontological truth. Gorz offers this: 'those activities are autonomous which are themselves their own end. In those activities, subjects experience their own sovereignty and fulfil themselves as persons' (1989:166–7). This autonomy, this sovereignty, is always under question. Rather than seeing these independencies as absolute—which would be impossible with even the slightest glance towards feminist discourse, which has demonstrated in all kinds of ways the profound interdependencies between subjects—I see them as relative.[1] If autonomous activities are always only *relatively* autonomous, then in what relation are they to heteronomous forces? Which ideologies, dynamics, norms or even rules do they succeed in evading? I want to hold on to the possibility that we might, in relation and even opposition to some of the destructive tendencies and effects of work discussed in Chapter 1, '[reconquer] spaces of autonomy in which we can *will what we are doing and take responsibility for it*' (Gorz 1989:166, emphases in original), and that involves producing something of an autonomous direction of action, because of the very real present of indelible, immutable, everlasting interconnectedness.

This sense of sovereignty has impacts as well as limits. As writer Alex Soojun-Kim Pang notes (Cocozza, 2017), the responsibility for productivity has shifted from organisations and their leaders

1 I think quickly to the writings of both Joan Tronto (such as *Moral Boundaries* (1993) and Eva Feder Kittay (such as *The Subject of Care* (2002, with Ellen K Feder), both working in the field of care.

to individual workers; the worker may have the feeling of individual sovereignty, to use Gorz's term, but it is put to use heteronomously. An institutional wall may be met in terms of how much a team or department or business can increase productivity through structural means, but each worker by themselves can climb over the wall if they just try hard enough, deploy sufficient 'life-hacks' and so on. I can see how this fits rather neatly with increasing shifts towards (pseudo-)self-employment and temporary, part-time and otherwise precarious forms of work, in which the individual is responsible for maintaining and developing their working capacity from job to job. Alternatively, I can see through a Dejoursian lens that this is precisely the opportunity work offers to develop the subjectivity of the worker. For Dejours, this is precisely the potential of work: that there is a prescription of what *should* happen, a task that should be met, in relation to which there is the actuality of what can and will happen. This gap between assigned and actual is the 'real' in which failure must be faced, and the subject is required to be creative in order to overcome it; in so doing, the worker's 'powers' are revealed and expanded (Dejours and Deranty 2010: 171).[2]

In rehearsals for *Recreation*, we would joke that we needed to stop Kit, the only member of the core cast without a qualification in dance performance, getting too good, as that would undo the point of his presence in the cast. He would become too efficient in his performing, he would do it too well, become too productive, thus undermining one of his reasons for being there, in that he is not a professional at this, at doing dance. He would satisfy the normative forces of the situation too well, reducing his unskilled autonomy and making too visible the heteronomous forces at work, which include my choreographic input, the notion of what a good dance is and how it is to be done, requirements from the audience to impress and so on. This really is a joke, but it has at its heart a genuine concern that a certain quality of performance disappears when it is done too well. I'm attached to the joy that seems to appear when the tasks at hand are done poorly or somewhat clunkily. I like it when 'productivity' is low, if I think through the language often used around the actual labours of human beings. I could certainly have asked one of the trained dancers in the cast to perform the only solo recognisable dance moment in the whole performance, a continuation of an improvised 'folk dance' that begins as a group. I like it precisely *because* the effort outweighs the impact; Kit demonstrates that he does not have the embodied skill and experience to gracefully work his way through it, so he *must* do it on his own terms. Kit makes visible the gap of the Dejoursian real as he moves, rendering available to the audience his working-out, his creativity, his failure and the efforts it takes to overcome that failure in new ways. Each time he does the dance

2 I am aware that a Dejoursian conception of failure within or as work could be expanded with and through and in relation to the discourse on failure in performance studies (such as Sara Jane Bailes' 2011 book on the subject), but this would be too major a digression for this chapter.

it is different, but some components remain: a lack of syncopation, a minimum of dynamic change, simple symmetries, awkward placings of hands on head, little motion in the trunk as limbs make repeated shapes. In this sense he reclaims this dance as an autonomous space not because he has sequestered it through skill but because he cannot satisfy the heteronomous forces through which the frame of the dance came to be. This is a meeting of Gorz's autonomous activity and Dejours' work, where the space for autonomy is produced out of the visibility of the effort to meet the task and the creativity in overcoming the constraints. This, of course, results in a dance that captures the performance of a folk dance in what might be called a true sense. It is a dance of the people; a dance of a person. It is inexpert. It is done for the sake of doing it, rather than for the sake of performing it. It is its own end, danced to be danced despite the fact that it is put in front of witnesses. According to Gorz, if something is its own end then it works to satisfy the category of autonomous activity (1989).

And yet it is effortful. Kit shows concentration in his face, determined to meet the audience's gaze. He is enthusiastic in his movements, punching them out gawkily. There is too much energy for what the choreography itself requires, and it is this abundance, this effort without gain, that resists the productivity, the efficiency, of the professional dancer. There is a thing called 'a dance' which Kit's energies meet and then oddly exceed; this excess is his own. Kit has never learned in technique classes how to shift his weight easily, where to place his feet in relation to one another, how to extend through fingers or offer motion in the torso in relation to the actions of the legs. Amongst the other impacts it has, technical training is the prime productivity intervention of dance performance, and Kit hasn't undergone this 'hack'; instead, his work is to iteratively expand his powers through the constraints in order to always not-meet the task determined by outside forces. Kit's dance, despite his many practices of it, remains unproductive in dance's terms: it is not particularly novel, it lacks flair, it does not have a normative grace. But through this it really becomes a dance, a dance qua dance, a dance in and for itself without it needing to produce qualities which reflect on the performer's talent, skill or ability. This is a simple dance, a dance that is only dance, a dance that does not reflect on its own quality as a dance. Because of these complexes of statuses of this short moment of movement—a dance as a dance that resists the efficient production of dance's values whilst abundantly producing-consuming energies, and, in so doing, solidifies itself as only a dance for itself and nothing else—it resonates with the residues of workerly activity whilst setting them to one side, or, from a Dejoursian point of view, it is work and it uses work's paradox—that the task required cannot ever be met—to make space for something like autonomy.

As Helen Hester points out in an article for the Autonomy think tank, 'work' is not synonymous

with ‘effortful activity’ (2017). She’s not chiding, suggesting that because something is the result of effort that it somehow doesn’t deserve the reputation of work. Rather, she is offering the possibility that we can all do things that demand effort without it being absorbed by the wage relation, that the exchange of that effort and the time it takes to expend it does not have to be for the benefit of the extraction of value for capital’s coffers. She is reminding, as Gorz does, that even autonomous activity requires ‘work’, and to conflate lack of effort with non-work activities masks its energetic, interesting, enjoyable and personally and socially valuable potentials. This aesthetics of effort is particularly notable because it is not present in most of the rest of the performance, and, perhaps, because this visibility of effort is very common in much recent performance, which works towards unfolding clearly the work necessary to make it happen, through either descriptive or physical means. Dejours writes of the different visibilities of layers of work, noting that though some elements of production are made visible and even performed—through a range of theatrics from the drama of staying late at work every night to always being late for the next meeting, echoing strongly Federico Campagna’s vivid description of contemporary labourers (2013)—the real work of creatively overcoming the gap between the assigned and actual work is always invisible. It is always bodily, sensorial, a corporeal-intelligent work which is difficult to see in usual places of work. But its invisibility is mostly derived from the fact that in order to do the work of work, to encounter the impossibility of completing an assigned task and to find ways around it, always involves going beyond the accepted protocols, norms or even rules (Dejours 2007). This necessarily involves a clandestine approach. These visibilities are teased out and reordered very differently in most of *Recreation*, but, here in Kit’s solo, it is the effort itself, and the transformation that is happening as a result of Kit’s effort, the going-beyond that he is undertaking in order to attempt to meet the tacit, normative tasks that doing a usually dance entails, which is made abundantly visible.

Kit’s work in the folk dance solo has this sense of the autonomous in it. I can describe it as a kind of non-work, or identify how it exceeds or slides around work in a metaphorical or even conceptual or philosophical sense. I want to be clear, though, that I think that while this abstraction is useful for the development of a discussion, it is economically and even socially less-than-accurate. The truth is that Kit is a worker in rehearsal and on stage, and I am the employer. This is true in an economic sense, but also in a practical, relational sense, in that I have designed the framework in which Kit and the other performers operate; I have chosen what will happen and when. I am cautious to remind myself that these economic and social constraints limit or at least shape the emancipatory gestures of *Recreation*. Kit is not at all autonomous in this sense. When I began this project—both the research and *Recreation* as a performance thereof, I was convinced that the

only way I could retain a positive ethical position was by paying everyone involved. Now I can see that the reality is much more complex and nuanced: imagining that everything in the performance would have otherwise been the same, had Kit not been subject to role 'worker' but the role 'participant', his dance may be more readily described as autonomous, done in his own time, absolutely voluntarily. But I think that this, too, is an error: even if he was a volunteer participant undertaking the activity as part of his free time, he would still be a contributing performer offering his dance under the gaze of the named choreographer—that's me—who would expect certain actions to be undertaken at prescribed and validated times in designated places with predetermined relations to others. Dejours would certainly include this in his conception of work, regardless of the economic relation. Choreography of this sort is necessarily a disciplinary undertaking, with 'workers' and 'managers', regardless of the status of the actors therein.

Kit's dancing was not his way of making a living. He gave himself to this dance, and indeed to the project as a whole, with very few conditions. Equally I was not making *Recreation* in order to make a living; it was the focus of this PhD project, the doing of which supported me for three years, but I likely would have made it for some other reason in some other way had this not been the case. Kit was given money in relation to his participation in the project; that money did not come from me but administratively flowed through my bank account from a public source—most of the funds came from grants from Arts Council England, with some other monies directly or indirectly from state or charitable organisations in the main—so I really wasn't exchanging my own cash for Kit's dancing. More than that though, I think Kit and I, and the others, formed a relationship which really was about seeing one another unconditionally as contributors to a common goal in which we had differing roles. Once it was us, doing the things we do, it had to continue in that way—and, as in the Shoreditch Town Hall performance in which Kit was injured and could not perform—when someone else had to replace one of us, this unconditionality broke down and so did the autonomy of our various actions. Kit's dance had to be *Kit*'s dance, in our relation with one another, in order to retain that relation and, circularly, the sense of autonomy, the lack of outside force, and the economic incommensurability of the danced contribution. Dejours repeatedly insists that to work is to live together (Dejours 2007, Dejours and Deranty 2010). The kind of living together that my collaborators and I undertook was one of an economic relationship *and* a social one, which I hope to unfold more richly in the coming pages using both Gorz and Dejours.

Gorz describes autonomous activities as having three criteria: they are 'performed at leisure, in co-operation with others and through the voluntary sharing of the tasks involved' (1989:223). I find this a useful framework for thinking through of what recreation consists, neither problematically

overdetermined as described earlier, nor wading in a fog which prevents the possibility of envisioning the future and dulls the rhetoric. Where Eva Swidler would turn to working class leisure pursuits to nourish and activate her leisure ethic, I would like to suggest that artistic practices—here, *Recreation*—can also find ways to reveal and articulate the many nuances, ambiguities and uncertainties in of what this leisure ethic might consist. I think that artistic practices of different sorts may be able to refine and expand the leisure ethic and its associated actions in the conversation between and synthesis of theory and practice which Tokumitsu finds essential for gaining post-work ground (2017). In order to work through this, I will turn once again to the performance *Recreation*, using Gorz's three criteria for autonomous activities and working with them using Dejours' conception of work, with the hope that writing through these ideas will not only demonstrate something of the leisure ethic in action but will also complicate and extend the ideas of the thinkers on whose work I have so far been drawing.

Performed at Leisure

The longest-serving section of *Recreation* is called 'Mermaids'. Its development began on the very first day of the research and development period in January 2016. In fact, its inception came much earlier, in another performance of mine with the Danish choreographer Karen Lambaek; the second half of the double bill we made in 2012, *DOUBLE ACT*, was entitled *The Mermaid and the Hammer*.

At the BALTIC performance in November 2017, the previous part, a section called Care Sculptures, has just happened. The audience has just watched the five dancers perform a series of poses, poses which have the effect of the bodies forming sculptural units with the set on stage. The set itself is composed of coloured mats and peach-beige firm foam, each carved into graphic shapes: circles, almost-triangles, ovals, and a very big cloud-shaped piece of foam which has next to it a smaller version of itself. The impression is something like a 21st century Hepworth exhibition if everything was squashed into a performance space, bodies and objects alternating their identities in a blending of human and non-human agents to reciprocally negotiate, decorate and support. It's not just that it's more densely-packed than Hepworth would ever have it, it's also that it's as if the sculptor's smooth, hard forms have been made squashy in themselves, something akin to soaking bread in liquid very briefly. The forms are still solid and shapely, but the substance is spongey. It's cuddly.

The poses the performers take up amongst this set change slowly and carefully, the five moving from one freeze-frame to the next with a sense of purpose that ensures that it is clear that they are not, after all, at leisure. Work is associated with speed and productivity to the extent that leisure takes on a sort of mythical connection with the slow. Think of recreation and basking in the sun or pottering slowly around the garden come to mind, a meandering way of being, without velocity towards a goal. In Care Sculptures, though, there is a more tensile quality, a precision of pace and focus which makes it clear that this is not made up on the spot. The positions are not found through feeling; they're known ahead and assumed. The performers are not engaged in that sort of wandering attention; they seem to be in something more like a flow state, that absorbed mental-physical condition originally conceptualised within the context of work (Csikszentmihalyi 1975). Care Sculptures is being performed at leisure, but it's a different kind of leisure; it's a leisure that demands care and presence, interest and focus. The thing about Care Sculptures is that it's really hard to do: it's a fixed set of positions (adapted to the needs of the cast where necessary), learned very quickly over a couple of hours. Each frame involves a different number of performers in different places on the stage, and the relationship between them is key, for if one is incorrect or missed out then the remaining sequence will not be able to proceed. The tempo is also fixed but nuanced; not every change has the same speed. This is a huge challenge for the guest performers in particular, and I can sometimes see them checking the faces of their more experienced colleagues from across the playing space, looking for clues as to when the right time might be to set off for the next image. The 'leisure' quality of Care Sculptures is more chess than rounders, more careful carving than distracted knitting. Care Sculptures offers a reminder of a different sort of leisure than the throwaway relaxation so easy to summon: a leisure with a deep presence.

This deep presence resonates with Dejours' writing that work, under his definition, produces an intensification of subjectivity (Dejours and Deranty 2010). I am not suggesting that this is visible, here. I don't think that the performers, if asked, would describing their experience as having intensified their subjectivities. But, as Dejours and Deranty explain, this intensification is corporeal, bodily: 'the body, as it were, feels its own life more intensely and more fully' (2010: 171), and, as such, is somewhat incommunicable, not fully understandable, perhaps, even to the subject themself. For Dejours, this contributes to the invisibility of real work; here, in the Care Sculptures section of *Recreation*, something of this intensification is rendered not visible, exactly, but somehow otherwise sensible. It is through the choreography as a whole—what this section is made up of in terms of actions on stage, plus the set, and the lighting change, and the long text I am reading out at the same time, and the introduction made by one of the cast about how this section will work—which seems to, after all, communicate something of this intensification which is a consequence of

the structure and enactment of a kind of activity called work. This communication is not linguistic or ocular but makes me think of the way in which American postmodern choreographer Deborah Hay describes the cell-to-cell communication of her practice (Foster 2006; Wilson 2013). This communication of the intensification of subjectivity—which always includes the body—towards an audience appears out of a set of circumstances which are, in the way I have described, leisurely, recreational. This complicates the binary of work and leisure, multiplying the axes along which to make decisions about categorisation and generating a way of being which houses one inside the other reciprocally, infinitely.

The first posture of Mermaids is the last posture of Care Sculptures. First, Amanda and Viki sit side by side, stage left, slightly downstage of centre. Their arms closest to one another form vectors perpendicular to the floor, where their palms take much of the weight of the upper body, the arm straight from wrist to shoulder. Their torsos and faces are straight on to the audience but by no means combative, the gaze direct but indistinct. Their bodies fall away from the arms in chevrons, upper legs at an angle to torso, lower legs at an angle to upper legs, feet at an angle to lower legs. The mind fills in the differences to mark that they are symmetrical, or notices the attempt towards symmetry and its real-life deviation. It is a sculpture of care, a positioning of the body that is careful, meticulous, just as placed as all the others but for the first time in the series this one is organised presentationally, in that the front of each body on stage faces the front of each body on the seats.

Next, Chris and Kit make the same positions further stage right, this time with feet connected instead of hands. They are the inverse posture, like two different sets of lions at a grand double staircase somewhere. Chris and Kit, not having had dance training as Amanda and Viki have, are ever so slightly less symmetrical. Just as the women are, they are different people of different sizes and different proportions, strengths, muscle tonus and the rest, but they are even more different from one another than the women. This is acceptable in the conditions, where posture after posture has been made, the bodies placed next to the measured perfect neat geometric set blocks and compared, made *almost* the same, forgiven for their unsynthetic animality. Chris and Kit are understood as quite the same neat formal posture, another care sculpture in the sense of carefulness, just as directly offered to the audience. Finally, Jenn positions herself between the two couples, her shoulder almost meeting Kit's and her feet almost meeting Viki's. She joins up the geometry, forming a line with V-shaped ups and downs from Amanda's feet to Chris' feet. The mermaids, each on her own rock adjacent to all the other rocks, or on one big long cliff facing the sea, are a care sculpture of a new kind, the most formal of them all.

After a short while, roughly the length of one of the longer Care Sculptures images, the mermaids soften. Their chests hollow, shoulders sliding forward, side-bodies drooping. They might roll over so both hands reach the floor, knees remaining bent, body and face directed towards the side of the stage, or they might lower onto a forearm, the weight shifting from acute pressure on hand and hip and spreading more evenly along the limbs. They might flip the direction of the pose altogether, facing the back of the stage, retaining the mermaid shape but on the other side of their body. The gazes lower or raise, not quite avoiding the audience but not taking any notice, either. The Mermaids dance begins. It is a small dance, and begins at its smallest point: the mouth. Each mermaid begins to enunciate, their tongue teeth lips cheeks chin and anything else that joins in moving in relation to one another, composing themselves collaboratively. Then the abdomen of each performer begins to move in strange staccato rhythms and swift swirls; ribs jut front and back or around, the spin curves from side to side, the sternum pulls through or pushes into the ribcage. The mouths don't stop, so now there are ten points of action—five mouths, five abdomens—as well as the occasional shifts of angle or direction of the pose. Then a further five limbs join the dance, with each performers' free arm, with all its articulations, shoulder and elbow and wrist and fingers, is brought into motion, following or echoing or replacing the movements of the mouths and torsos.

It is altogether an indistinct sort of dance, too definite and too directly shared amongst the performers to be a random improvisation, too fluffy and undefined to be clearly anything in particular. It appears to be choreographed but only just choreographed. The performers are all doing the same thing and yet all doing it rather differently: their mouths don't take the shape of the same words, or one person's shoulder is the more active and for another it's the wrist. There's a wandering feeling, a flickery wobbliness, something I'm just not managing to put my finger on in writing. It is, in many ways, the opposite of Care Sculptures:

Where Care Sculptures is definite, Mermaids is indefinite. Where Care Sculptures is linear, Mermaids is all at once. Where Care Sculptures is geometric, Mermaids is flickering. Where Care Sculptures is a few at a time, Mermaids is everyone always. Where Care Sculptures is big shapes, Mermaids is small motions. Where Care Sculptures is the whole space, Mermaids is a distinct area. Where Care Sculptures has audio accompaniment, Mermaids only has its own shuffly sounds. Where Care Sculptures waits to be seen, Mermaids unfolds in its own time.

I think I know what the performers' attention is doing: what we have agreed is that they follow a whole song of their own choosing, mouthing the words and echoing the vocal line with their spine and arm. As they add in each additional sub-score, they can select which elements to include,

and how many. They are engaged in a considerable compositional task; unlike Care Sculptures, where the postures and their transitions are fixed, Mermaids is a score in which each performer is designing the details of their own practice. And, unlike Care Sculptures where the beginning-middle-end is known and in relation to which the performers can measure their energy and anticipate an ending, Mermaids is more or less the same throughout, but for a gentle crescendo through the staged introduction of different body parts. It is almost impossible for the performers to gauge the passing of time in this material (we tested this many times in rehearsal and the range of guesses for, say, a ten-minute rendition of the score, could be anything from six to 25 minutes). As a result of the combination of complexity and open-endedness, the relative solipsism, the performers take on the audience's wandering focus, as they let the mental music permeate their actions.

In contrast, I sense the audience's attention drawing in. Care Sculptures, with its two main component parts—the movements and the text—which rub against one another, proposes a kind of overwhelm, an impossibility of following everything. With the invitation to let the mind wander, this results in a form of spectatorship which opens out, mirroring the use of the whole stage space, all brightly lit. For Mermaids, the lights draw in to focus only on the performers as they deviate little from the formal, ridged line they produce the moment Jenn assumes her position. Similarly, I notice my maker-spectator attention sucked into what they are doing, following one performer for a while through her arm gesturing, or then noticing the counterpoint relation between the rib actions of two others. I enjoy the restful, meandering nature of my attention which is not going beyond what I am watching, as I imagine the attention of the spectators to be during Care Sculptures, but a gentle noticing of that which arises and falls away, of what tickles at my perception and then disappears, *within* the choreography. This isn't that flow state that the performers of Care Sculptures might experience; it's not a direct switch of performer and audience states. Rather, it's a reconfiguration of the recreational. Here, I speculate, the audience and the performers are as close to one another in manner of being than they have been anywhere else. It is towards the end of the show and they have been, quite literally, through a lot together. I get the impression that everyone is sufficiently practised now, everyone has become accustomed to one another and to the situation, to such a degree that everything can slacken. It's a drawing-in to oneself and being open to the other. It's a different sort of performance at leisure. This is the sort of leisure that leisure brings to mind: this is sitting in a garden on the evening of a hot day with good friends, not speaking because there's nothing to say. There is no awkwardness, for nothing more than this is expected.

This exchange of qualities, of modes of attentiveness, between cast and audience, is a moment

of sociality which renders the social context of the event perceptible. It is a reminder that this is not so much a cultural artefact, done and dusted, where it is the audience that is engaged in the social, in their night out or gallery visit with friends; equally it is not the kind of performance where the operations on stage are what produces the sociality at stake only, with the spectators there as witnesses. In *Recreation*, though the performers and the cast are engaged in mostly very different activities, there is a common sociality produced through a subtle switching of positions, a nuanced movement between who is working for whom and in what way. I think that there has been a lot of work, in both the material and social ways Dejours categorises work (2007), as resistances against the world in different planes. But this work has made possible a sociality of solidarity, of belonging, overcoming together the difficulties of work to produce something like a recreational space within which the activity of work is suspended, the effects and affects of the effort humming in relationality but not in continuous action.

Apart from for me. This is the end of the performance I have worked on in different ways for several years. Soon, at the end of Mermaids and after a short coda which follows it, the performance will be over and I will have to face the audience. I am no better at gauging the length of this section than anyone else, so we have a system with the technical operator who times the section and gives a hidden cue at a designated moment. I don't know when this will happen; I can't seem to sensitise myself to this, however hard I try. So after a while trying to be present to and even enjoy the work of the cast, I start to worry. I try to discreetly look at my watch, remembering if we started on time. I try to sneak a peek at the technician's table. At the Shoreditch Town Hall, London performance of *Recreation* in October 2017 I found myself willing with all my energies that Amanda would feel that somehow this had gone on much longer than usual and she would catch my eye and understand through eye contact alone that it would be a good moment to take her cue and calmly leave the stage, starting the cascade that ends Mermaids. The tension in my body and mind during most of Mermaids is not leisurely, not for me. It is agonising, like waiting for exam results and waiting for a text message response from a new boyfriend all at the same time. It is in this moment when I feel most alone in the performance. For the first time I feel that the performers and the spectators are operating in the same leisurely plane, albeit in different forms. They are basking, their thought-behaviour permitted, whatever it is, transparent in what Dejours would call their 'deontic activity', their working around the task however they can, individually and collectively. I am not doing what the performance would have me do: I am working, working in the sense that my sense of self is bound so tightly with the success of the work that there is no space whatsoever for me to find another way of being; and, moreover, that's not how I 'should' be. I'm no longer the bridge between the stage and the auditorium through my work as a choreographed voice from the

audience but cast out as cast and audience come closer through their own modes of action. I am feeling strongly the sense of suffering that Dejours says is always contained within work (2007), and, in this moment, I cannot find the positive, life-affirming effects.

In Co-operation

Near the beginning of Recreation there is a spell. To perform this spell, the five performers stand almost shoulder-to-shoulder in an arc slightly upstage left. They each stand on two feet, balanced, the spaces between them just more than what would be comfortable and necessary in every-day life, like the careful spacing between the newly-shaped, scarcely-practised letters a primary school child might form in a handwriting exercise. Like this writing, the standing together is both simple and commonplace, replicating a usual phenomenon with an extra touch of staging, of care.

Each of the performers come from their previous locations, either offstage or within the space, finding efficiently but casually this collective posture. Hands are by sides, waiting. This is the first time the costume as a whole is displayed, leisure-wear in pastel blue and pink, and navy. Each per-former has their own version of the combination, navy t-shirt with pale blue jogging bottoms, or a column of baby pink. They could be a sports team of some sort, or a 90s pop band just starting out, still with their day jobs in cafes and schools and offices, with not enough money for a designer or stylist but with a few quid to get something matching-ish from the Internet. The costume collects them whilst asserting their differences, not only through the variation in colour but also by demon-strating their bodily differences through the measuring apparatus that is the same clothes of the same proportions, even in different sizes. Tall guest performer Chris' trousers are shorter than he might accept offstage, the legs of the trousers dangling straight down with no rumpling; Viki's, in contrast, reach right past her ankles and ruffle outwards as they compress, accordion-like, down her short legs.

Kit offers a note. He is good at remembering notes. It is an F natural. Each of the others uses Kit's note to find their own, the same one or an octave either side. They check and double-check themselves with the others, necks slightly straining forwards to hear whilst staying put. They are connecting with one another for the first time, preparing for the first collective action. The fact that this is a primarily a sung action demands this connection (as well as a lot of rehearsal); it is extremely obvious to all but the least-musical in the room if it is incorrect. I get the impression that the performers enjoy this moment, feeling a bit like an orchestra tuning up, knowing that this is at

least as interesting as what the preparation is for, for its announcement of a mystery follow-up as much as for its satisfying audible properties. Another image flickers: they are, in my mind, a bunch of celebrity singers around a microphone waiting to record their parts in a charity single, hovering upwards and inwards with their gazes, one hand on ear with the other hand available for gestural analogies for their increasingly melismatic offerings.

The first vocalisation responds to this image, or perhaps I have this image in my mind now because, of course, I always know what is to come. There are four notes, sung once and then twice, as a repetition. There are three parts: a harmony, a melody and a drone, based on part of the chorus of Donna Summer's 1977 disco hit I Feel Love. The manner is projected and the sound loud. The five performers turn their attentions and their torsos towards the audience, addressing them with over-the-top arm and hand gestures reminiscent more of a spoof opera singer than a real professional classical vocalist. It's a burst of energy in all directions, arms intuitively moving slightly back on the inhale and then pulsing out and extending and extending a little more over the course of the exhale, over the course of the four notes if they manage it, reaching as much for the audience as out of themselves. There's a hint of competition in the overlapping of arms as each performer stretches their upper limbs beyond the neat gap given to them by the others' careful placing.

And then they stop.

They pause, rest.

That was merely a teaser, maybe an amuse-bouche, a little burst of a familiar trope of performance—a kind of hammy, panto-esque charade of performers showing off—to tickle the audience's attention before the spell proper begins.

First Kit. Kit sings his four notes, the melody, twice. Kit has a soothing, calm voice, musically very accurate, which is tremendously soothing and calming for me because I have almost no doubt that it will happen exactly as we have planned and practised it without embellishment or error. To a new hearer, I imagine it is also soothing and calming, a pleasant voice to hear, a tonic for the brazen bellowing of just seconds before. The others join in one-by-one, bringing in lower and higher parts. As they sing, they sing more and more together, listening less to the frequencies of the watchers watching and more to the frequencies of their fellow doers. It is very soft, and as slow as their lungs can manage: each sequence of four notes takes up one very full breath. This means that they are breathing together, the core of their very different bodies operating in the same rhythm,

not in the almost-togetherness of choreographed unison, always always always slightly off and recreated as 'unison' in the spectators' minds, but a real unison of body and voice, or five bodies and five voices, or indeed of one body and one voice made up of everyone cooperating. Co-operating, working together, working together only.

This is, perhaps, a little hopeful. In Dejours' writing on work, co-operation is placed in conceptual opposition and practical parallel with co-ordination. Co-ordination is analogous to the official task at hand in the context of work: it is the external control of the activities of workers through procedures and managerial actions. It is the management from above of the relationships between workers. Co-operation, on the other hand, could be seen as analogous to the actual work workers undertake in relation to the official, prescribed task. It is the self-organising of the workers themselves against, outside of or alongside the rules and instructions, which together produces a different kind of living together. As in the individual, it arises only in relation to its prescribed partner. I think something similar is happening here: I established the rules. I have choreographed, managed the performers into a particular situation—so they are not 'working together only', but working together in relation to my direction. But I am far from responsible for all that they do, and this additional way of communicating, organising and working together necessarily has to go beyond and sometimes against my suggestions or prescriptions. This extended co-operation can only be realised if co-ordination exists; without it, the group would have no context for being together, and their co-operation would not be this collaborative invention.

This does not mean that everyone does the same thing. Viki has the responsibility of initiating the main body of the spell. Viki has a similar responsibility throughout Recreation for, for whatever reason, as yet unknown, she seems to have a sense of time more accurate than the others. Viki always knows how long to do something to have it feel right, by which I mean it feels right to me, right to me in relation to what feels right for the others. Viki has the responsibility of guiding time from the stage because I cannot guide the time effectively from the seats. Viki guides the time not as a boss but as the person with this specific skill who can then draw in the others, just as Kit offers the note. Their contributions are not born of authority but of responsibility to the others, and the responsibility doesn't exist if the others aren't in, too. This is co-operation. Viki takes up her by taking up her hands, softly bringing them into action. They rise slowly but definitively, just as clouds are soft and light and barely-there but barely there is still most certainly there. She begins to form soft shapes with her hands, as if rolling a ball between them, or using one to pick up and put down something like the lightest softest balls of dough, maybe those Japanese steamed buns called bao, whose name makes one's mouth into the shape of how they feel, round, and shapely

and empty at the same time. Viki's gestures are the same: full of nothing.

The four others use Viki's gestural dancing as the cue to test if they, too, are ready to do their version of the same dance. I seem them deciding, not wanting to go all at once but still animated with the impulse that a set cue has. They see in their peripheral visions each other and line up their own desire to move with a common composition. Their gazes fold in, but that doesn't mean they've stopped working together. It's as if, without the visual part of themselves activated, the ten hands find the same hazy space, the same softness in connective tissues, the same confident, doughy quality. This isn't always the case: at BALTIC it seemed to work particularly well, the five northeasterners stepping in line to one another, everyone speaking in roughly the same way in rehearsals somehow resulting in everyone dancing roughly the same way on stage.

They are still singing, and the singing and movement of the hands direct themselves towards one another, drawing together, coming close in both texture and, somehow, space. Each dancer is absorbed in the casting of their own spell, each shaping a different set of actions softly, softly, softly. They are based on a slowed-down, re-oriented set of actions from cooking, either the cooking of a favourite recipe for a person you love, or, for variation, the gestures of a TV chef squeezed through the same choreographic manipulations. Only I know this along with the performers, and maybe the few other collaborators who have seen this part being rehearsed. I am trying to unknow this so that I can see what else might be happening, but this feels impossible with this particular section, and, in fact, several audience member friends mentioned independently that this part looked like cooking. Everyone's cooking a different recipe: Amanda makes a sturdy shepherd's pie, Viki a flamboyant Jamie Oliver fish dish, Kit a soothing noodle soup. Together, the five performers are preparing a feast, a feast whose stirring, delicious scents are carried by their voices to the audience and beyond. The feast arises from the imaginary cauldron between them, the appearance of each dish arising only in dependence on the preparatory actions of everyone: Kit's ramen can only exist if Amanda's pie does too.

The singing echoes this interdependence: as the singers get tired, either physically or from the boredom of mostly repeating the same four notes over and over, they can drop out for a round or two, or, in some cases, choose to sing a different line for a while. (This second option happened a lot at BALTIC because, fortuitously, both guest performers were unusually strong singers. It happened much less at, say, Shoreditch Town Hall, at which Kit was too injured to perform and the guest performers were vocally less confident.) I still don't fully understand how they did this: this section was often rehearsed with guidance from the core performers while I took part in

technical preparations and, though the idea and its practice were developed in rehearsals under my direction, it seems I have forgotten how it works. I suspect it works differently now, anyway; I'd be reminded every time I watch it otherwise. It is, as such, quite as enigmatic for me as it is for the spectators. I hear different lines becoming stronger, the descant line appearing here and there, Viki's high drone fortified by Chris' bass tones. I hear a duet of two higher voices, and then, without discussion or negotiation, they stop to be replaced by the harmony, dangling low and alone. I know it can't be totally fixed, these comings and goings—there's simply not enough time in the rehearsal process to realise a set score of that complexity—but the performers know what they are doing and what the others are doing without much hesitation. It seems like magic. And, all the while, the hands are moving, holding everything down, keeping everyone going, performing a magic of their own.

According to Dejours, work is a domain in which an individual's subjectivity makes itself known to itself, develops its powers, expands its capacities—it performs a magic of its own. Doing this in relation to others, through co-ordination and co-operation, extends these potentials and elaborates them interpersonally and socially. This involves a commitment to 'mobilising the workers' determination in order to ward off violence in the disputes or conflicts that might arise from disagreements over the ways of working' (Dejours 2010: 83). This requires not only a kind of going-along-with but another layer of dedicated action—'deontic activity'—which is beyond the basic needs of the task but is undertaken in order to work together, which, for Dejours, is always living together. This deontic activity exposes the fact that working together is *not* self-evident but involves additional effort (Dejours 2010). Part of this effort is offered in not an excess but in a withdrawal or holding-back: it is 'limiting one's intelligence and subjectivity', the very things that are exercised and stretched and even produced through work for the benefit of all involved (Dejours 2010: 83). As such, working together is a necessarily social, companionate act, which includes something of a sacrifice of one's own desire to transform. This is apparent in the spell, where each of the performers is subtly, delicately moderating their own performance in relation to the others. This might be about making their movements smaller, or lighter, or share a quality similar to their neighbouring performer, in order to support the others. It could be, conversely, about singing louder, or more regularly, or not taking a break when they might. It means putting the collective transformation, the joint magic, before that of the individual's own desire to sing or not sing, move or not move, and certainly above the rules agreed beforehand with me. I want to emphasise that this is not about equality, of effort or visibility on stage or of skill, but about both prior, explicit and in-the-moment, tacit agreements to co-operate on the basis of who is there and what is happening. Dejours' vision of work and the language he uses to describe it is vivid—for him, it is intimately

related to celebrating life (Dejours 2010), and this involves an attentiveness to life itself as it unfolds.

With the same seeming knowing, the same practised magic, the same agreement between them, the singing stops. I know the performers have planned this but it still feels like a surprise; I can't figure out what the rule is to make it end. Then, one by one, the hands stop dancing and come to each person's sides. The fact that the spectators are not given the rules but that it is clearly neither totally fixed nor entirely chance brings to the fore the spell's cooperative nature, and its relation to an outside co-ordinator. By setting apart these five people from the others in the room in their knowing of how what is happening is happening, their groupness is emphasised. This could be true of any performance, of course, but what is emphasised here is the suspended, partial transparency, the feeling that it should be possible to figure it out, and yet the hidden cues, the private rules, the mystery of their co-operation. The subtle difficulty of the multiple harmonies, the detailed movements, the simultaneity of the parts in each person, and the ongoing collaborative composition which appears to shift and come to an end without a cue, points to the work undertaken in rehearsal. This work is not just graft, it seems, explication or repetition of a set of predetermined activities, but the work of co-operation itself, the delicate, careful work of coming together to come together in work. Co-operation itself is emphasised in a pouring of individual efforts into swirling, shared pot.

Here the spell transforms, first into a common swaying, a shy bouncing, as the performers attempt to find a common pulse. It's a strange moment, their shared folding into the spell suddenly opened, with silence making things weird. Why did they stop? It seemed like the right thing to do. No more than that. They know each other and what's happening and just felt it out, together. In the movement that follows it's as if you can see their side-eye bodily listening, the occasional glances at one another's knees to see if they're aligned, or at least on their way. After a short while they find one another again, with full eye contact and energetic bouncing at the knees. Before long I find myself internally bouncing with them, egging them on, my body a barely-moving cheerleader. I wonder if the other people watching are there too, or if it is only me joining in, choiceless in my nervous system's response to the insistent pulsation. I wonder if their insides are participating. I think so. I hope so.

A movement is added. It takes up two bounces. The hands come together, right hand in left, palms upwards. 1–2. One person does it. It's catching. Another does the same, some bounces later. And then there's another movement, two hands rising and making a half-circle, altogether taking three

bounces. A silent musicality arises, with the bouncers each offering the same two movements at different moments. There's unison, canon, counterpoint, ripples of action along the semi-circle in which they stand or moments of connection between opposite performers, choreographic devices appearing only as a consequence of the score; it's too complicated to arrange in advance (for me, at least). It's a complicated drum line played across five players, or maybe a Meredith Monk vocal work with no sound, sound replaced by action. The mode of reception appears not to be looking but listening, as if each has their eyes closed. I watch them like watching an orchestra, the seeing supporting the hearing, enriching it but not replacing it. It's not just the performers who are co-operating, but the senses that seem to co-operate, working dependently on one other, shifting from the humming dreamy haze of commonality in the early sub-section to this pseudo-synaesthesia here.

A performer says a number. 4. A few more bounces. 1. Bouncing, bouncing. 3, 4. And on, with the performers adding numbers. I devised this game, where the performers match the numbers in the bar with those already gone before, inserting their offering at random moments, but it still makes me nervous. It's very difficult. If one person goes off, says a 3 when the shared number determined by the previous utterances is 2, it is obvious, and a huge challenge to reset. Each performer must work with incredible concentration on their own internal counting, whilst being receptive and available to changing in case someone makes an error; they need to give up where they are and reform the collective thought in order to proceed. Besides the need to correct mistakes, the performers need to be near-clairvoyant—connected in their co-operation—to anticipate others' verbal offerings in order to, as before, work with a shared improvised choreography within the score. There's no I in TEAM, they say, but there is in CO-OPERATION, right there, a vowel sneaking in to distort the sound of its preceding consonant, and it is this internal-external, individual-shared, alone-together aspect of this game that makes it both so precarious and so engaging. The interlocking of individual work at the service of a shared outcome is what charges the space. My cheerleading impulse gets stronger, like it's the last few moments of a sporting event and my team is winning but only just. It feels risky. I think the spectators see what is happening, are perhaps counting along too, understanding the rules in a way that they couldn't with the spell. I hope that they are also supporting my guys, willing them to get through it. It's seductive, compelling, enveloping, this collective endeavour, this game so close to being lost at any moment.

The performers build the intensity of the game, adding more numbers whilst attempting to keep the physical composition going. The more numbers, the easier it is, and the effort eases off into a more playful place, an enthusiastic shouting, the bellowing of a group of friends singing along

to a well-known song, maybe something that supports that bellowing. Oasis comes to mind. They are now resting, awaiting the next cue, which again comes from Viki: a gesture that she does only once. Her right hand makes a line at her left side, then her right, then drops down. Three bounces-worth of movement, that's all. At the next bar, where 1234 would be collectively started again, 5678 is instead spoken with all the conviction and purpose of a children's jazz dance teacher. 5678 always means a new thing in dance; it always really means 'go!'. And so they do, moving away from this spell of cooperation, into the next thing.

Voluntary Sharing

Sharing and cooperation are very close neighbours. Here, I'd like to think of sharing as sharing-out, the division of activities, of work and other things. As much as *Recreation* is made up mostly of group activities, there are numerous actions that are the responsibility of just one of the team. Three of the most visible solos are those I haven't yet touched in writing. They come at the opening and closing of the performance on stage.

When the lights first rise on the playing space, Viki sits alone near the back of the stage, framed by a backdrop many times her size; she is small, and it is large. She shares its colours, swathed as she is in sloppy, comfortable pale pink and pale blue, with her hair usually a colour complementary to *Recreation*'s design. She is singing into an invisible microphone, her left hand raised in a loose fist near her face. She's singing a pop song from the 1990s, a familiar one, I think, to most in the room. She has a distinct tone to her voice, both deep in pitch and girlish, nasal. She has, as talent shows like to say, made the song her own: she has repitched the very high chorus so it's nearer to the range in which the verse lands. It is not especially musically accurate or in any way spectacular, but there is a pleasure in hearing the recognisable song sung in a relaxed way. She rests herself on her free arm, weight on hip, vaguely facing the audience, or sits cross-legged, body leaning forward. At one point she kneels, seat on feet, facing stage left, body upright, and the extra space the position creates affords her the room for grooving, beating the tempo with tiny pulses coming from within.

Amanda enters as Viki is making her way slowly towards the pile of scenography upstage left on which the latter woman then sits, watches, and waits for her next bit. On the floor is a square of red tape marking the playing space, which the performers only leave to indicate their being 'off'. Amanda enters stage right and stands firmly on the upstage right corner of the taped square. She

is Olga Korbut, about to take a gold medal at the Munich Olympic Games in 1972. She is poised, prepared. She raises her arm to the V of the gymnast and proceeds accordingly. Instead of entering the space, though, she follows the red line across the back of the space, the tape becoming a beam. She hops and skips, leaps and lands. Given that she is not, after all, a Belarussian teenage gymnast from the 20th century, but an arts manager and former dancer in her mid-40s from Northumberland, she does not complete the most acrobatic moves, instead indicating somersaults and cartwheels with angled turns, arms spread wide to represent all four outstretched limbs. Despite not completing the most athletic feats, Amanda's dancing resembles Korbut's rhythmic complexity and mischievous charm. There are little leg flicks and turns of the head like a pantomime deer, and a neatness of hands and feet, all pointed, and a delicate poise. After a couple of laps, Amanda takes out her ponytail, takes a foam block from the pile, and lies over it, centre stage, blonde hair spread out in a fan facing the audience.

This lying back posture is echoed at the end of the show. As the performers leave one-by-one, each venue's female-identifying guest performer takes another block—different for each performer, depending on the space's sight lines and her height—and lies back on it. Where possible, her hips and knees are higher than her head: she is descending, literally putting her feet up. First this role was performed by Lauren, Yorkshire Dance's Facilities Manager. Then it was Jen (one n) who works on the bar at ARC in Stockton. In London it was Shoreditch Town Hall's Front of House Manager, Zena. Most recently it was Jenn (two ns), who is part of BALTIC's Crew, mostly doing invigilation in the galleries. Each took the block we had decided, moved it to a new place on the stage if necessary, and gently, carefully, assumed her pose. After a short rest, she began to sing to whomever was remaining on stage, which changed at each place as the performance was adjusted. Actually, she didn't sing to them, but they were there, and they listened, just as she didn't sing to the audience but we were there, and we listened. Exceptionally fortunately, each of these women turned out to be singers ranging from pretty good to outstanding. Each sang a variation of I Love to Love, a British disco classic. It's a song that has a sweetness in tone; it compares the two leisure activities, club dancing and recreational sex. A cappella, and singing slowly with many pauses, *Recreation*'s guest performer made the song languid and melting, quite like her posture. Her fellow stagegoers peel off one-by-one, leaving her singing alone, projecting her high voice into the air above her, not quite directed anywhere. When she has finished the parts of the song that she had prepared, she gracefully tips herself off her plinth and walks offstage, ending the performance.

These are not the only solo elements in *Recreation*; I have described and discussed those others

elsewhere. These three also share certain qualities: they are performed by women, and these women are doing things for which they are not trained; the activities are not part of their work life proper. Each solo activity is composed of a performance event—singing or gymnastics—which has its own clearly-defined and recognisable criteria of being done well. Even if *Recreation*'s performers had the skills to undertake these tasks—such as the guest performer always really being able to sing—the possibility of her doing so adequately was distorted, made difficult: Viki's song was not in her range, Amanda didn't have the correct gymnastic equipment or space, Lauren/Jen/Zena/Jenn's posture is distinctly unfavourable for singing. The solos heighten and make visible the resistance that is required for an activity to be work. Each solo section has a choreography which involves the demarcation and prescription of a specific task, and an exaggerated problem in the way of that happening, making apparent Dejours' 'real' (Dejours 2007:73). This real is that which comprises what work is in work; it 'manifests itself to the subject through its resistance to procedures, know-how, techniques, and knowledge' (Dejours 2007:73). In these solos, the real of work is made visible at the same time as the quality of recreation is maintained. In so doing, the performers are operating between their knowns and their unknowns, each inventing new versions of the work and of herself.

Together these three solos and their soloists share the burden of some of *Recreation*'s politics, a politics of alternative excellences, a phrase Peggy Olislaegers used after seeing the Yorkshire Dance preview version of the show. I think this means, here, that the solos work to expose the 'deontic activity' of work, that which, as Dejours has it, has to happen in order to find one's way to satisfying the assigned task but which is not part of, or may even be contrary to, the rules of the situation, in collusion with others: the other collaborators support the production of and continuation of the rules which the soloists require to continue with their work. The performers meet their tasks—they sing or do gymnastics—but their effort to overcome the resistance of the material world—the very definition of work, according to Dejours—produces this extra action which is usually hidden (Dejours 2007). Because this task-plus-resistance is built into the choreography it has the effect of making important that which is usually hidden, of celebrating the alternative, the other ways of doing things, and the other ways of things being 'excellent'. Crucially, none of these solos display the kinds of aesthetics of effort discussed with regards to Kit's folk dance solo earlier in the chapter. These sections are not about showing effort in that way. Instead, they are limited to a tonal plane which is about either luxuriously languishing, or exuberantly playing. As such, work-as-effort—work in Dejours' sense—comes to meet recreation, and recreation itself is shown as requiring work. To make this possible, each of the performers share part of her process of work, in the slightly romantic way in which Dejours sometimes describes it: the revelation of the

new powers of the body, the new range of feelings, the corporeal challenge. There is something personal about each of the solos: they are slightly embarrassing things to do, to sing inexpertly or with difficulty, or to pretend to do gymnastics as an adult woman. The performers, then, share of the intimate challenge of work, the intimate nature of the unfolding relationship between themselves and the apparatus of the choreography, including the space and the set and the light and the time and the audience through this potentially embarrassing action. This sharing may not have been entirely voluntary—not spontaneously so, in any case, as its form was devised in advance—but it was done willingly, and, I think, with some keenness.

The sharing-out of activities was mirrored in the process of making the performance. I found myself with this large, complex project to run, and I felt overwhelmed. For the most part, I tried to keep this to myself or discuss it with outside eye Roberta or producer Beckie. But it seeped out, with my arriving on mornings of work very tired or exposing my stress increasingly in conversations with Amanda, Kit and Viki. So, willingly and voluntarily, people started to take extra things on. Amanda laundered the costume. Viki took care of filming things. Kit found the app for setting the note. Lighting designer George sewed a bit of extra fabric onto the backdrop when we found ourselves in a theatre with a higher rig. Roberta made a draft of the show a few days before the preview when I couldn't see what was happening any more (I didn't use her version, but it still helped). Beckie steamed the backdrop. Everyone carried set up and down and in and out, seemingly endlessly. It is so hard to admit to these things because it so closely enacts the components of some forms of exploitation, where a role expands beyond the confines of the contract and the agreed remuneration for those responsibilities, even though this is the very basis of capitalism. But I don't think this was an exploitative action any more than the wage relation in any other well-meaning context. The sharing was expansive in rather another direction. Just as the performers were not-really or not-quite professional performers in most cases, the cast and crew of *Recreation* also found themselves acting as not-really or not-quite logistics experts or documenters or wardrobe mistresses. This sharing of the burden, the sharing-out of the project's actions, makes each person more than their prescribed role. In that way, the capacities that each person is not just invited but permitted to perform become broader, and begin to cross over with one another.

To use Eva Swidler's language, I think this is what makes a commons. The sharing out of activities beyond the narrow band of a professional role within which an individual's contribution should be channelled—even when that role is to be a non-professional performer—allows for a deep sharing that goes beyond slicing the pie, dividing the operations into chunks. Instead it produces overlap, repetition, abundance of willingness, each turn of generosity producing more and more of it. The

collective contributions come together to produce a way of being and a set of shared actions that are both deeply tied to their originator and free from individual ownership. The sharing itself is what makes the commons: it's not what the individuals share but that they share, that there is sharing, creating an environment in which sharing is increasingly possible. But in that sharing each person must do something distinct, their own, somewhat unshared in a context of sharing. I tried to set up a process where there were opportunities to reflect on the offerings of each person involved, such as check-out conversations at the end of the day in which each person was thanked by another for a specific contribution they made. This wasn't an attempt to manipulate the atmosphere or to mask the real situation of the work as work, but to invigorate an alternate possibility, to acknowledge the giving that was already happening as noticed and valued by everyone. I was not the only arbiter of what kinds of offers were merited congratulation; each person rejoiced in the merits of another without my intervention. I too was one of the group. My generosities, even in the context of a production that was 'mine', were celebrated. The things in which we rejoiced were never the 'productive' components: it was never about a top-notch lighting state or a song well sung. It was always about the things around and beyond the tasks themselves, the additional activity that each person and the group needed to do to make things work: kindnesses, character traits, attitudes, and how these appeared in action. As a result, these closing rituals became another way to recognise and make space for the real of work.

This co-opting and adaptation of the Buddhist practice of rejoicing in merits was very enjoyable. It is designed to invoke positive emotion and a sense of connectedness with others and it did that in the rehearsal rooms of *Recreation*. I think the performers of the three solos I have here described also very much enjoyed their individual sections. I could see them glimmering, excited for those parts, wishing to rehearse them not only to be able to do them well and confidently and comfortably but because it was fun to do that, fun to sing dreamily or sleepily, fun to lie down on the foam, fun to pretend to be Olga Korbut (Korbut is, truly, Amanda's all-time hero). That these activities were fun, even recreational, for Amanda, Viki and the guest performers does not undo their non-voluntary status. They shared the work, as all my colleagues did in the rehearsal process, but it was not *really* up to them what they did and how they did it and when they did it. They were participants in the process but the final decision was mine. I feel uneasy about this, about writing this down, about confessing that *Recreation* doesn't satisfy this aspect of recreation. I would like to go back a few paragraphs, focus on the ways in which the people around me spontaneously and enthusiastically volunteered themselves for things. They did do that, and it did all the heart-opening I want to turn towards; it is a glimpse of the recreational utopia I would like to dream up. But it appeared through work, through thought and consideration and planning and direction. It is not

only this wage or employer relation which made it work, but the physical, psychical and relational efforts that each person and the group together made. It is through the setting of work tasks—by me or by whomever—and the constant and dedicated effort to creatively meeting and working through the difficulty, or 'suffering', of failing and transforming that made it possible for something like recreation to make itself known and felt and enacted. This suggests, perhaps, that this recreational utopia beyond *Recreation* must be similarly manifested, not through the spontaneous, simultaneous arrival of the leisure ethic and the commons that Eva Swidler seeks, but through the spaces of and action of work in its broadest sense.

Working towards Recreation

These three aspects of autonomous activities are not separate. As I hope I've shown, *Recreation* expresses these qualities in ways that are overlapping and interdependent. I've used parts of the performance and its creation as a way of exploring the ideas, and the ideas as a way of exploring the performance; I could have configured the elements differently to illuminate each in a different way but no less productively. Moreover, I have attempted to think through some of the ways in which autonomous activities are not exactly autonomous, or properly fitting to a sphere that could be called recreation, without a conception of work.

In order for this to happen, I have had to follow Christophe Dejours to a more open understanding of work, in which all activities that involve the experience of the resistance of the material or social worlds, encountered in the effort towards completing a task, are included. This naturally involves extending 'work' to mean something beyond that which is purely economic, and can include things that, for André Gorz, would be work-for-oneself or -oneselves or autonomous activities. Politically, this seems a crucial move, but one that should be made carefully. I note that this does not simply suggest that all things are work, because that does precisely the life-destroying sucking-in of all things into the economic sphere which need not be, fortifying claims that work absorbs all human energies and depletes us towards other things. That is not the kind of expansion I am advocating. It seems crucial to follow Dejours to remind ourselves that many other things which involve workful effort exist, and that, indeed, they cannot and should not be economically rationalised. This allows a shameless attention to broader human interests, endeavours and powers which need not be validated by them being called 'work', in the economic sense. As a result, those who direct their efforts—'autonomously' or otherwise—towards other things in other domains (including child-rearing, art-making, community organising and so on) would no longer need to justify their activities by

calling them economic work, comparing them to economic work, or through any other apology for using their capacities to something other than economic or somehow para-economic ends (such as training for future work). This begins to make space for something called recreation, activities that can be suspended, perhaps, in a category called 'autonomous activities' despite emerging from and through different forms of effort. This kind of activity might be predicated upon or otherwise involved with work-as-effort but has itself as its own end. Thinking recreation through work, surprisingly, allows recreation and its qualities to properly be seen. I think that this is what I have tried to uncover through the performance *Recreation* and in thinking about it in this chapter.

Despite the fact that it is possible to extend the conception of work fruitfully, much work in contemporary society is in relation to some kind of economic purpose. Many people still work many hours in employment of some kind. What Dejours' thinking suggests is that this is not as bad as we might think. I propose this cautiously, because to see anything positive in work seems to risk underwriting some of contemporary labour's harmful effects; Dejours himself argues that contemporary management practices cause 'the collapse of the ground that allows individuals to recognise what they have in common, what they share, and what lies at the very basis of their confidence in one another' (2007: 86). Nonetheless, Dejours' main argument is that work is also the way in which human capacities transform and develop, where subjectivities intensify, where people live together. As such it is a kind of training ground or development opportunity if, as he writes, 'what emerges from subjectivity in work is recognised and respected' (2007: 85). I wonder about whose recognition and respect Dejours is calling for. If it is those who determine the structure of the management practices—the managers, consultants, capitalists—there is a risk that these things too will be co-opted into that which can be charged as economic work. If the workers ourselves could recognise and respect—really recognise and respect, not begrudgingly, not in-spite-of—then this would be an opportunity to subvert the domination of unwanted work and use what it can offer to our own ends. This is possible whether or not the managers attempt to take from what they see: transformations in subjectivity and in lived human relationships are not something, I hope, that can be stolen away thus. This is not the limit of Dejours' political ambitions. Reminding that it is not only that society influences how we work but that modes of work influence society, he suggests that acknowledging and giving dignity to that in work which unleashes and extends the workers' subjectivities has far-reaching consequences for how we imagine and organise ourselves beyond the domain of work proper. Seeing work for what it is—even celebrating it—can lead to emancipation (Dejours and Deranty 2010).

One of the obvious but helpful things about performance is that it places work in a social context,

meeting a certain kind of social reality the moment an audience walks in (if not before). This allows the work that takes place in a performance to have, perhaps, a more direct address to something called society, and to feel a rebound or other effect, in something close to real time. This chapter on recreation as a form of non-work and perhaps as the form of non-work crucial to the development of post-work futures was always going to appear in this thesis, given the title of the performance which occupies its centre. At the time, the naming of the performance was a response to a sort of hunch; it was named, in fact, before I began the PhD research proper. The direction of this section of writing, though, was instigated by a comment made by an audience member after the Shoreditch Town Hall performance in October 2017. This spectator, a friendly acquaintance who works for a consultancy which helps international businesses make their supply chains comply with best labour practices, particularly for women, told me that as she was watching the performance she found herself wondering if this is what life would be like if we had Universal Basic Income (UBI). As I lightly probed her thinking in this speedy, social way, it appeared to me that what she meant is that the performance had an air of the recreational: it worked—made effort—to invent a way for the powers of those present to be extended into this domain. According to post-work theorist David Frayne, 'leisure is a capacity' (Beckett 2018:para 47). I think *Recreation*, in some ways, was an attempt to 'recognise and respect' the work of everyone involved—including the audience—as efforts towards exercising that capacity, the capacity to do things that are ends in themselves.

4. Community Dance and Professional Dance: Participation and Partial Connections at Work

This is the final chapter of this thesis. So far, I have attended to a performance of my own making, *Recreation*, pulling through it features of contemporary labour in Chapter 1; in Chapter 2 I elaborated a conception of 'life' as work's alternative; then, in Chapter 3, I thought about what recreation itself could be and its relationship to work. The approach, has been narrow and deep, delving into the innards of a single artistic artefact, excavating just one choreography for as much as it can offer to the thinking on and doing of human activity within and beyond work.

Here the focus of the thesis becomes more expansive in at least two respects. First, *Recreation* is put to one side and attention shifts to the works of other choreographers, each of whom have made at least one work presented in professional contexts in which part or all of the cast were not professional dancers. These three works were presented, alongside others, in a festival I curated with Yorkshire Dance as an iteration of Juncture, which had previously been curated by choreographers Charlotte Vincent (in 2012) and Wendy Houstoun (in 2014). The new focus of this writing to the works of others marks a shift not only in the content being presented and explored, but in the vantage point from which the work is examined. I have never been intimately involved in the creation of and presentation of the works I discuss in this chapter in the way my experience can be seen as being central to the making of *Recreation*. I know the works by watching them, quite as any audience member would, particularly one working in dance and performance. I know the artists who made the work and, in two of the three cases, knew them a long time before turning my attention to their work curatorially and scholastically. They are all my peers, presenting work in the same contexts and sharing colleagues and friends. We are sometimes competitors, attempting to acquire the same resources from the same sources. In the context of their 2016 presentations in Leeds, I was jointly responsible—with other people and organisations including Yorkshire Dance,

the venues around the city in which the performances were presented, and the artists themselves—for the making-public of the projects for those who participated as performers and those who attended as spectators. I was involved in many discussions, practical and critical, argumentative and agreeable, formal and casual about each of the works and the festival as a whole (which, I note here for context, included many more events than the three discussed in this writing). I was often required to be in the position of advocate, a role I took on readily as a keen fan of each of the artists. All of this means that I am not writing from the relatively distant and objective position of the traditional scholar but continue to place this endeavour within the framework of practice-based research, for the intellectual, artistic and practical work of my curating was intertwined with the artists' intellectual, artistic and practical work of choreography. As such, I will continue to adopt in part the autoethnographic register of previous chapters, despite none of the works being of my authoring. As such, when I refer to the artists I will use their first names.

As well as my own experience of the works and their attendant workings, I conducted interviews with each of the choreographers; I limited this aspect of the research to this group primarily due to scope, and a desire to find voices parallel to my own role in *Recreation*. In future research I would be interested to investigate the experience of others involved, including audience members, participants, and staff from Yorkshire Dance. I see these informal interviews as background information which has informed my thinking rather than as source material and will not quote from them verbatim; they were as much an evaluative encounter for Juncture as they were a research device. I should point out that though I always intended to work through the choreographies of others, at the inception of this research, I did not know the offer of Juncture would arise. To my great surprise, months into my research I was invited to discuss the possibility of co-curating a festival with and for Yorkshire Dance. I was very excited and interested, but knew and told the Yorkshire Dance team that it would only be possible if I were able to devise a curatorial frame which related to my ongoing research. I expected my work with Juncture to be a helpful and interesting side project. As the work progressed, I decided to set down my originally planned case studies in favour of writing about what had happened in the festival. This was partly a decision based on the practicalities of time, but mostly it came about because I could see that the thinking and actions I was undertaking to make the curation possible was generative of new pathways of thought in relation to the PhD project as a whole. As such I didn't know that these activities and observations would contribute directly to this research project. Therefore, it was not recorded with the fine detail that would be usual in designed fieldwork scenarios whose participant-observer role is in many other ways similar to what I have done (though I do have many written records of the ins-and-outs of the process in other ways). This chapter, then, is written from a place of what I might call accidental

ethnography, a place both more intimate and more informal than initially intended.

Because there are three works to discuss as well as the context to make visible, the nature of the writing on them will be marked by a different sort of economy. Where I have attempted to unfold *Recreation* at length and from many angles, sometimes writing about the same thing more than once in different interpretive frames, I have been more selective with the works discussed here. I aim to strike a balance between working through chosen features, qualities or aspects of these works in a manner selective enough to advance some new thinking on them and works of their natures, while allowing each to breathe in its own right beyond a mere tool for my own meaning-making. To begin this new tone, I will simply name the works here: *Assembly* by Nicola (Nic) Conibere, *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration* by Jamila Johnson-Small and Mira Kautto working in their collaboration immigrants and animals [sic] (ina), and *Swarm Sculptures* by Lucy Suggate.

In the second way in which this chapter differs from what comes before, I will take the attention away from post-work thought and its relations to focus on questions of participatory and social practice in dance, theatre and visual art. Work, and its agents, axes and opposites are not left behind, but here I would like to think about how the specific artworks and their common or different ways of dealing with the presence and participation of non-professional dancers—those people who are not, in an official sense, working—come to reflect on dance's participatory, social, or 'community' dance practices alongside those called 'professional'.

We Can't Have a Community Dance Festival

The new direction is indicated by an exclamation: 'We can't have a community dance festival!'. This was uttered by Wieke Eringa, the director of Yorkshire Dance, as I began to form my ideas for the curatorial profile of my iteration of Juncture. I had explained that I could only take up the offer, proposed after I began my research, if it were directly related to my PhD, and so was suggesting a festival of works whose collaborators, if not performers, as in the three works discussed, were not dance professionals. Community dance continues to be a term used in the field mostly as participatory dance activity led by professional dance artists, often but certainly not always specialists in community dance. It is related to parallel practices in other artistic disciplines but, just as it has retained the word 'community' in a way theatre and visual art, for neighbouring examples, have

not, it has also held on to a set of values, threads of practice, and explicit and tacit ideologies, to which I refer below. Community dance, like its counterparts, has a history of low-key, self-directed, grassroots activity led by artists in consultation with participants and other stakeholders, along with myriad and varied political agendas and influences. As with much arts practice, particularly since the severe cuts to the DCMS's funding of Arts Council England since 2010 and the resulting loss of many, many posts and functions of the body, it is increasingly the case that organisations act as the conduit for the resources for community dance practice. Consequently, dance development organisations such as Yorkshire Dance have an extended remit around community dance, and strategize around, develop, finance and lead on community dance activity in their region, employing artists to deliver the work directly, partly replacing activities which would have been practitioner-directed in the past.

Like most similar institutions, Yorkshire Dance employs separate teams to focus on community dance and on professional dance, the inadequate shorthand title for dance activity involving only or mostly dance professionals. It has different funding streams to resource these activities, different partners who support the work and different stakeholders whose needs are met in each strand. As such, despite the organisation broadly working as a single entity, at the time I was asked to curate Juncture the divisions between the two areas of work were carefully held. Juncture is part of Yorkshire Dance's professional dance work, and, as such, is designed to satisfy a collection of requirements: it must present work otherwise not seen—usually understood as experimental, small-scale, fringe choreography—between Glasgow and Nottingham; it should offer professional development opportunities to dance artists based in Yorkshire; it should include the presentation of international work; it should offer a discursive platform about dance and choreography; and it should elevate the profile of both the organisation and the artist curating the festival. So far, no mention of community dance.

Perhaps it would be helpful to add a definition of community dance, here, but the understanding of the term appears to be in a continual, gentle flux, suspended in the practice and between practitioners. Even the website of the organisation representing, advocating for and developing the sector, People Dancing (formerly the Foundation for Community Dance), does not provide a snappy and succinct manifesto or set of guidelines for what the practice is—it is quite as plural as any other artistic discipline. Working mostly through the practitioner- rather than scholar-produced literature (such as Amans 2008 or the regular People Dancing journal *Animated*) offers numerous sets of ideals, aims, and objectives. Many of these are about the transformative potential of dance participation for individuals and communities, an attention to a radically inclusive approach

regarding the backgrounds, abilities and aspirations of community dance participants, and a focus on the importance of what a participant themselves brings to the dance activity (Bartlett 2008; Bartlett in Foundation for Community Dance 1996; Rubidge in Amans 2008; People Dancing Practitioners' Code of Conduct 2018). In short: everybody can dance, and community dance can be the support, resource, and aid in making that dancing enjoyable and transformative. Yorkshire Dance's slogan of the 2000s was 'Everybody Dances', and this could indeed be the tagline for community dance.

It is important to note community dance's near-neighbours: community dance is increasingly distinct from participatory dance, in which community dance carries the history of its ideals from the 20th century community arts movement. Participatory dance, though, can include entirely commercial dance-related endeavours with none of the political undertones regarding inclusion or deliberately transformative heart. In her 2011 text *Social Works: performing art, supporting publics*, scholar Shannon Jackson notes that there is an image problem associated with the term 'community theatre', and, in tracking the debate around community art, follows art writer Grant Kester to describe influential art historian Claire Bishop's view of community art as that which occupies 'the lowest circle of hell' (2011:55). It is more common to see art practice with non-professionals described as 'participatory', but this can extend to works in which the public would engage as spectators through their role *as* audience, or, in another sense close to the works I discuss in this chapter, as temporary participants in a work's presentation. The terms are not any more straightforward than the practices they seek to describe. Still, Wieke had a strong response to something that sounded to her like distinctly community dance. I want to draw some questions out of Wieke's statement. Why would she misunderstand the works I began to put forward—by professional choreographers or performance-makers with some sort of non-professional dancer collaboration—as community dance? Why would she be so resistant to community dance?

The first question I might approach with a thought about infrastructure, following Jackson's method of focussing on networks of support. Community dance and professional dance—meaning here dance-as-art, as opposed to dance for the sake of entertainment or commerce—in England both operate within a subsidised terrain, and as a result are each required through one route or another to demonstrate their commitment to the agendas of their funders. Where this is Arts Council England (ACE), as it often is, we are asked to show how our projects fulfil their mission: 'Great Art and Culture for Everyone' (2010–2020). The everyone is important: in applications and in evaluative materials it is required to give numbers of beneficiaries, that is, the people with whom the work comes into contact (the question of whether or not the work actually produces a benefit

is not a philosophical point entered into very readily by ACE, at least in the relatively light-touch grant-giving scenario). Because both community dance and professional dance both need to show value for money in terms of the amount of subsidy given for the pool of beneficiaries, each tries to reduce costs while addressing as many people as possible. This results in a divergence in aesthetics produced by the same forces: in professional dance artists try to reach as many audience members as possible with as small a team as they can manage, often with very few performers; whilst community dance has an equally small team for a large number of dancers, for these dancers are the participants *and* are the beneficiaries. Many of the works produced by professional artists featuring non-professional performers parallel the model of community dance, here, with a large number of unpaid performers considered the beneficiaries, rather than the agents, of the project, fulfilling the needs of England's largest arts funder. In all, the works of Juncture sought to include the efforts of 70 participants across a number of different works; anticipating this through our conversation, I can imagine that this brought to Wieke's mind large-scale community dance initiatives such as Big Dance, firmly connecting the collection of works in which I was interested to community dance.[1] Nic's *Assembly* and Lucy's *Swarm Sculptures* fit into this model precisely, whereas ina's *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration* required only two very carefully selected performers. Both Lucy and Nic were keen to note that their works are not artistically predicated on unpaid, non-professional performers, and with various caveats, were considering future versions that might feature professional casts. The funding infrastructure—amongst other factors—contributes to aesthetic rifts between professional and community dance that have little to do with the ambition or nature of the work itself.

I think Wieke's resistance to a potential community dancification of Juncture is also built upon a need to protect professional dance. Community dance can sometimes be seen as the poor neighbour of professional dance, and artists and participants have fought for resources and attention for its work. Since the 1990s, though, community dance's socially transformative potentials have been put to good political use and the practice has been supported to be increasingly instrumental in social, community, and health contexts (Houston 2009). Professional dance found it, then, difficult to make a case, art-for-art's-sake (whatever art's sake might be) less easily satisfying direct social change agendas and therefore attracting fewer resources; organisations and independents felt (and still feel) a drive to include in (or even crowbar into) projects some kind of engagement activity that can serve as some kind of community dance activity. Despite a shift

1 'Big Dance in the UK was a biennial festival of people dancing led by the Mayor of London in partnership with People Dancing and the Big Dance Hubs, a network of leading dance organisations across the UK' (Big Dance accessed 2018: para 1). Big Dance occurred in even years 2010–2016.

from 2010 onwards to an interest in 'excellence' and the marketability of, for example, touring work, ACE continues to fund socially-focused community dance, particularly in the regions, more readily than professional productions. Despite several attempts, Yorkshire Dance has not been able to secure funds for Juncture from ACE, instead fundraising from trusts, foundations and private support for each iteration. Juncture is Yorkshire Dance's most visible—and expensive—intervention into and offer towards the professional dance landscape, and Wieke, it seems, found herself cautious about a curatorial agenda that might diminish that hard-won ground.

These descriptions might suggest that the works in which this chapter, and indeed this thesis, are interested—professional choreographic works featuring non-professional performers, for which I wish I had a snappier name—are pulling community dance and professional dance together. One of the ways to think about them is through imagining a Venn diagram in which these works fulfil the overlapping, central section. I think there are elements of the works that indeed do draw these two parts of English dance practice into a more or less harmonious concomitance. However, I also think that Wieke's exclamation and its consequences or bases suggest that the works through which I'm thinking act in a rather different way. In fact, I think they are at the same time drawing the two circles of the Venn diagram into overlap and pushing them apart, forcing them to find distinction. Between the circles there is a gap, and in that gap things can happen, values can be exchanged, subjectivities activated, that cannot happen either in community dance or in professional dance and certainly not when the two are collapsed into one another. In part, this chapter attempts to articulate this new spaciousness created between the two areas of dance practice, and to see how that might illuminate the character and nature of the activities undertaken within this gap in relation to work and its opposites.

Theoretical backdrop

In seeking a definition for community dance, I have already referred to the nature of the literature on community dance: but for few examples, it is largely produced by the sector itself, with a range of publications offered by public bodies mostly advocating for and celebrating rather than critiquing its work. Much of the writing is descriptive rather than analytical. Though it is a helpful and interesting background, it does not provide, in a phrase favoured by Shannon Jackson, the kind of 'critical traction' I need to face my interests. Instead, I am working with a specific, recent, lineage of thinking on the participation of non-professional performers in the artworks of professionals. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to offer an in-depth recounting of the various arguments and

counter-arguments in this tradition (Jackson and Jen Harvie each give their own versions of the history of this thought in *Social Works* (2011) and *Fair Play* (2013) respectively), but I will mention three texts that have influenced, in different ways, my thinking.

Art critic Claire Bishop's *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2011) has become a central book in the discourse on participatory art, particularly but not exclusively within the visual art tradition. This text, which builds on a series of articles written and exchanges undertaken in the preceding years, covers a wide range of artistic production involving participation, mostly in Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries, from the *dérive* of Situationist International through the activities of the Artist Placement Group to the pedagogically-oriented projects of Thomas Hirschhorn. This text tracks a '*r*eturn to the social' (Bishop 2011:3), in which work of the 1990s and 2000s, categorised under a social turn, are related historically to their precedents. *Artificial Hells* is indebted to Nicolas Bourriaud's 1998 *Relational Aesthetics*, in which he discussed artworks whose 'aesthetic spheres' were of 'inter-subjective exchange' (Jackson 2011:45). Bishop acknowledges that the discourse he initiated through this text and related curatorial endeavours enabled so-called 'socially engaged' art to enter from the side-lines of community art into the visual art mainstream. However, Bishop insists that '[i]t should be stressed from the outset that the projects discussed in this book have little to do with Nicolas Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* (1998/2002), even though the rhetoric around this work appears, on a theoretical level at least, to be somewhat similar' (Bishop 2012:2). Bishop distances herself strongly from the text and the field of practice because she sees the artists within her study to be less engaged with a 'relational *aesthetic* than in the creative rewards of participation as a politicised working process' (2011:2), noting, nonetheless, that it is a consequence of Bourriaud's project that the works in which she is interested found themselves accepted by the visual arts institutions.

This might indicate that Bishop's perspective aligns with the politics and history of community dance, with its interest in radical social change beyond the danced activity itself. Shannon Jackson, writing in 2011, before the publication of *Artificial Hells*, works through Bishop's earlier writings (mostly in specialist art journals) and their problems, which, I suggest, are continued in the book. In the lengthy critique, Jackson discusses Bishop's resistance to artistic projects which either 'feel good' or 'do good' (Jackson 2011:48), suggesting that, in fact, Bishop's leanings might be away from community dance and activities like it; this is not to suggest that community dance itself is *only* invested in these outcomes, but that Bishop's approach unfairly side-lines artworks which might feel or do good, in Jackson's terms, missing the fact that such works might also be rich, complex, and powerful. This resistance to artworks that do or feel good emerges out of the

desire to maintain an antinomy between the aesthetic and the political in order to be able to think the relations between them. There is some difficult critical fall-out from this stance: the view that the private gallery system provides a less ideologically saturated, more neutral space for artistic endeavour than that of the government-subsidised version (particularly under 1990s-2000s New Labour in the UK); that artworks involved in explicit antagonism with the audience or participants is more valuable; that there is something called 'artistic autonomy' which must be held firmly, and that artworks must retain this in order to retain power and historical-critical importance. For this research, one of the difficulties with Bishop's angle is her relationship to labour; she states that her 'discussion is framed with a tradition of Marxist and post-Marxist writing on art as a de-alienating endeavour that should not be subject to the division of labour and professional specialisation' (Bishop 2011:2–3). I hope that my writing so far has already put this perspective under some strain.

Theatre scholar Jen Harvie, in 2013's *Fair Play: Art, Performance, and Neoliberalism*, also places forms and consequences of forms of labour under question, within a set of discussions of the relationships between participatory performance and neoliberalism. Though in the introduction Harvie is clear that she will 'neither utilise nor propose a set terminology for socially engaged art and performance practices because [she] want[s] to recognize and explore their variety, dynamism and hybridity' (19), this results in a subsequent chapter (Chapter 2: Labour: Participation, Delegation and Deregulation) that conflates and theorises together disparate activities whose actions, textures and consequences are in large part different. The primary concern for me relates to her discussion of 'delegated' performance (a term borrowed from Bishop, and of which I too will make use, below), in which artists invite, request or otherwise invoke the actions of others in order to realise their work. Her examples draw from works made in the contexts of both theatre and visual (gallery-based) art, in which the artists (Punchdrunk, You Me Bum Bum Train, Anish Kapoor, Phil Collins and others) are dependent on other people to make the art product a reality.

There are two main categories. The first involves artists involving others in their process, an example being Phil Collins paying people in Ramallah to dance in a video, which he then exhibits, or the You Me Bum Bum Train directors asking for volunteers to work on their show. The second category is that of participatory artworks, in which the mode of spectatorship requires the audience to do something, usually physically (30); she writes about immersive theatre company Punchdrunk's work here, and the single audience member in each of early 2010's hit theatre gimmick You Me Bum Bum Train's performances. Though it is true that each could be described as delegation to someone else, they are nonetheless very different things. The former situation could quite easily describe most theatre and dance performances. Most directors and choreographers at one time or

another work with performers who are not them. In a tour of my performance *A Lyrical Dance Concert* (2013, with Sara Lindström), performer Eleanor Sikorski joined me on stage. There's no need, as I see it, to describe this in this special way as 'delegated'. She's simply a collaborator who joins in something I am authoring; the delegation might be true, but it does not merit the use of a new conceptual category. In *A Lyrical Dance Concert* there is also the other kind of 'delegated performers': the audience. The show is pretty much entirely dependent on the participation of the people who come. They act. They sing, and dance, and laugh, and hold our hands, and even sometimes come onto the stage. Imagining that this is suddenly more of an activation because the people are moving about betrays the Rancièrian emancipation that Harvie—and indeed Bishop—invokes. Audiences are active in their engagement always, even when they choose to fall asleep, ignore the action, or walk out. Where Harvie states that such works are engaged in 'distributing agency to a greater number of people' (36), I would argue that any artwork is the site of many vectors of agency, including, always, the spectators.

Harvie raises the question of such audiences as 'prosumers', those consumers who are producing their own products of consumption. I struggle to understand this description any more than I would find it easy to think about my stroking a dog being a moment of prosumption. It's true that I am active in producing the action that allows me the sensation; my action is indeed part of the sensation—it's not that only I feel the fur or experience the consequence of slowed heart rate, but that the sensation of my action, of lifting and moving my hand and arm, is at the centre of the complex of feelings, emotional and physical, that can be described by 'stroking a dog'. Further, Harvie suggests that this delegated performance is a form of deregulated labour, remaining unremunerated and even very often requiring ticket purchase in return for permission to undertake it, thus producing a form of exploitation. Though in *Recreation* the performers were indeed paid, this is not the case for all of the works of Juncture and I do not consider it necessarily 'more' ethical to pay people: instead, the payment constitutes part of the ethics of the work overall and can be interrogated with greater nuance. Though I disagree with Harvie's approach, she nonetheless offers useful ballast in connecting historiographies and analyses of participatory art and particularly performance to contemporary labour under neoliberalism.

Like Harvie, performance theorist Shannon Jackson refers to and critiques both Bourriaud and Bishop, using the legacies and, perhaps, inadequacies of their contributions to develop an argument in a new direction. Responding in part to Bishop's preoccupation with the autonomy of the art object and the resultant intellectual inconsistencies, in *Social Works* (2011) she elaborates on the impossibility of the autonomy of the artwork. Through a series of essays covering a wide range

of socially-turned artwork, mostly from the visual art tradition, and a wide range of theoretical sources, she foregrounds what she describes as an 'infrastructual aesthetic'. Moving away from relational aesthetics to 'interdependent performance' (240), she attends to the work of Santiago Sierra, William Pope L., Rimini Protokoll, Elmgreen and Dragset and others to describe forms of art in which the aesthetic and the infrastructural are indivisible from one another: 'the specious divisions between aesthetic insides and social outsides must go' (15). Instead, Jackson develops a theory of support, of infrastructural avowal, in which everything—*everything*—that goes into making an artwork what it is must be included in its analysis. This means the concrete apparatuses upon which physical objects might stand, but can also include the ephemeral labours of actual living humans, even when the work itself is ephemeral, in the way that performance is often defined. This question of support is echoed by the whispering thread of 'care', as a topic and approach, which runs through both the previous chapters of this thesis and *Recreation*. Support is of Jackson's interest not only strictly within artistic domains, but also in relation to broader ideas of the social: she is 'most interested in social practices where the exposure of the aesthetic infrastructure that supports the aesthetic object coincides with the exposure of the social infrastructure that supports human societies' (2011:39), reminding us that to operate from a position of institutional resistance can undo arguments *for* the institutions on which we depend for our health, culture, and ways of life.

The term 'social practice' is key to enabling Jackson to pursue her theory of infrastructural aesthetics. This term is central to the way in which participatory artwork is framed and understood, combining aesthetics and politics in a way which 'many hope to find in the discipline of experimental theatre and performance' (Jackson 2011:12). 'Social practice' is quite as broad as 'performance' and finds itself referring to a wide range of practice across multiple disciplinary territories which produce events that are 'inter-relational, embodied and durational' (12). The term both honours multi- or cross- or inter-disciplinarity and 'gestures to the realm of the socio-political, recalling the activist and community-building ethics of socially engaged performance research' (13). Jackson traces the blurred edges of the term, acknowledging that it can refer to activities with different lineages, standards of production, terminologies, and relational frames, in a heterogeneity that pushes against the boundaries of forms of art and life.

In this thesis, I have been interested in social practices within and beyond artworks called 'work' and 'recreation'. These could be seen as sitting in the part of Jackson's interest indicated by the phrase 'the social infrastructure that supports human societies', but, again, the divisions between the insides (aesthetic) and the outsides (social) are 'specious', and Jackson seeks 'the unraveling

of the frame that would cast 'the social' as 'extra'-aesthetic' (2011:16). I think that this thesis so far has been engaged in integrating this aesthetic and social, or, rather, animating through writing and performance the coincidences of these not-fully-distinguishable domains, and I will continue with this approach which is informed by Jackson's. I build from the previous chapter, hunting still for a graspable sense of recreation, now beyond *Recreation*. I seek in this chapter to consider how recreation is a variety of social practice which finds form in works made by professional choreographers with non-professional performers, and how the works and their methods of production constitute the infrastructural support for recreation to take place. In the following sections, I will look at the three selected works from Juncture to work towards a discussion of the relationships between and through community and professional dance, and work and non-work, by unfolding the insides and outsides in relation to one another.

The Companion Species Manifesto

I have made the theoretical backdrop a backdrop on purpose, each text becoming part of the set, increasingly towards the front of the stage, in order that I may have the action supported by them, in an effort towards the avowal of the infrastructure that is this discourse. The action takes place in a slightly different mode, and has demanded a new critical-creative partner which can help me to think about the particular binaries in pairings of professional and non-professional or amateur, worker and non-work, labour and leisure, professional dance and community dance. To work with these ideas, I look to a rather unusual side-line: a radical feminist pamphlet about the relationships between people and dogs. Donna Haraway's 2003 text, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People and Significant Otherness*, the precursor to the longer *When Species Meet* in 2007, is about the relationships between humans and animals, more specifically between humans and dogs as a domesticated species, and, in many moments, even more specifically between Haraway and her dogs Cayenne Pepper, an Australian Sheepdog, and Roland, an Aussie mix. In this short book, Haraway covers broad bio-philosophical ground, offering anecdotes about the life she and the dogs share along with stories from other dog lovers, other breeds, and the history of certain practices of canine domestication, including agricultural working dogs and the sport of dog agility. Through these, she advances a theory of the companion species, the sort of kinship relation in which each subject, dog or human, is the companion of the other.

To describe a relationship of companion species is to avoid the form of kinship in which humans code the animals in their lives and in their homes in terms of belonging to biological or adoptive

human family; Haraway is critical of those who talk about their companion animals as children or themselves as parents. This would contract the relation, which a relation between distinct others, into a sameness—of species, if not of direct genetic heritages. Haraway is careful to hold canine and human as distinct entities with a theoretical space between them, a space prescribed by the companionate relation, a relation of significant otherness. To be a companion species—and this always involves at least two, for the accompaniment goes both ways, or all ways—is to create this relation continually, this ethical modelling suspending two as two and never as one.

In this writing, Haraway picks up Marilyn Strathern's 'partial connections, which are about the counter-intuitive geometries and incongruent translations necessary to getting on together' (Haraway 2003:25). She hunts for them through tales/tails, making both the partiality and the connectedness rich with 'shaggy dog stories' (25), which enable the theory of significant otherness to be not only relevant to dog-human encounters and relationships but in order to think through how 'to live [with such ethics] at every scale, with all the partners' (62). Haraway, in this book, identifies or creates 'ontological choreography' (100) in which each subject, canine or human, remains both discretely in their category but comes to inscribe themselves on the other through these partial connections, through this relation of significant otherness. I am interested in observing and describing this ontological choreography, thinking about both the connections that are made between apparent binaries—concepts or fields as well as human subjects—and in the space produced through deliberate but companionate othering. The staying together whilst being apart is the most important of all, for if these characters, whether person, role, field or something else, are pushed apart without this commitment to caring connection then there is no charge. My question is complicated and simple at the same time: how do the companion species relations produced by works made by professional choreographers with non-professional performers support a social practice we could call recreation?

Significant Otherneses: *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration*

To recap, Haraway is setting up a relation between agents which allows for space between them. This is the kind of space I'm suggesting works made by professionals with a non-professional cast produce between professional and community dance. I want to use Haraway's theory to continue to elaborate what that space might be, and what happens within it. There are other forms of

significant otherness here, all the dyads associated with the work I'm considering: facilitator and participant, giver and receiver, teacher and student, professional and non-professional (or amateur, etc.), superior and subordinate and so on. Here I must make clear that I am in no way suggesting that in any of these dyads one subject stands in for a human and the other a dog. These things are not exactly parallel. In some cases, it is helpful to set up these analogous relations as a metaphor, in order to be able to view and speculate upon things, but most of the time I am interested in how Haraway's examination of the human-dog relationship provides bio-psychosocial thought-matter with which to work beyond such direct stand-ins.

To begin to think about significant otherness, I turn to the work *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration.* Jamila Johnson-Small and Mira Kautto, working together under the name immigrants and animals, are highly skilled. They trained together at London Contemporary Dance School in undergraduate and postgraduate courses, and have since worked together, separately, and in various collaborations with others. Each has her own physical, technical and creative emphases, but both are athletic and virtuosic in their capacities. *LAURA LAURA*, when performed only by the two choreographers without making the work into a double bill, doubled by its being performed also by another pair in the same evening, is a site where these capacities are active, with substantial sequences of high-energy, fast-paced and long-limbed motions. In my mind's eye there's a whirl of straight arms and legs, balletic extensions mixed with whips of limbs not with the freeflow of release techniques but with the bound clarity of gymnastics.

The costume, too, alludes to sportiness, with black Adidas tracksuit tops, a fashion-orientated sort with a large white logo on the front and a mesh panel around the upper torso showing bare skin beneath. The fact that neither performer feels the need to wear a bra is a point of interest in my (larger-busted) view: only younger women, fitter women, women with smaller, more pert breasts would usually walk around publicly, let alone engage in a physically vigorous dance performance, without the support of a decent bra. The choice to show this seems significant: it's a subtle but definable gesture of positional display: we are young, we are confident, we are stylish, we are good at this. This is our space. Below the tracksuit top each woman wears substantial black knickers, thin black tights, sports socks and trainers, the high-top aerobics kind worn by both Cher in her aerobics videos of the 1980s and Wim Vandekeybus' Ultima Vez dancers in the 1990s. This is no slung-on costume, no Primark-dash bounty of the last day before the show when there's little left of both time and budget, nor is it the relatively recently (again) fashionable trope of wearing 'everyday clothes'. It's thought-through. Slick. Professional.

In *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration* at Juncture, there are two more women. These two women perform the score as Jamila and Mira watch, then they swap, the choreographers immediately enacting their original version of the same work. These women are Alison and Sara, two women living in Leeds who were selected to be the doubles. They are not doubles, though, not *doppelgängers*. Alison and Sara are a couple of decades older than Mira and Jamila, of different ethnic backgrounds and looking nothing like the choreographers, apart from that one each is dark-haired and the other fair, the darker one always the taller. They wear a version of Jamila's and Mira's costume: brightly coloured pants over tights, plain vest tops, Converse-copies and matching colourful socks. I can see their bra straps. These *are* the finds of a last-minute shopping trip into Leeds' high street stores, but it is still considered. They still match one another. The costumes are not irrelevant here, either. It is important that they match. It is the signifier that these women are a tribe of two, or, in Haraway's terms, kin. Like Jamila and Mira's coupling, the performance is predicated on the intimate teamwork possible only in a pair. They are conscripted into the pairing from the outset from the strangeness of their clothes, the gesture towards underwear, the private sameness like matching pyjamas matching sheets matching curtains in an imagined mid-twentieth century sitcom where husband and wife (the only intimate coupling allowed) share a room but not beds, bodies making parallel lines facing the camera and never one another.

Alison and Sara are much more tentative in their movements. They two-step and walk, wiggle their hips while staying in one place. They use less of the space: my mind chooses to remember them as an image, has them placed just off centre stage, whereas the original performers are a whirlwind, circumnambulating with force, with a kind of generous flight. Alison and Sara find awkward connections between one another; physical partnering in a dance performance is new to them and limbs stay straight, forcing the partner away as much as making contact. They are doing their dances, old ones and maybe new ones, dances that have come out of a few short days of working with ina. I don't want to simply, applaudingly, awe at these dances; I want to stay away from the mode of attention to such dances that collects them into a space of celebration, because I don't think that that is the function of this work. To write this performance in this way, in a clapping-along, aren't-we-all-supportive tone, would be to undo the radical questioning of dance performance itself in which LAURA LAURA is invested, whether it is doubled or not, but especially because it is doubled.

I want my approach to match the harsh attitude of the original performers' manner. This is a serious matter. There's no room for messing around. There's not a smile or a giggle, even when it seems like it could happen. There's a tension between the content, which in degrees is full of

spectacle, and the tone, which is closed-off, somewhat cold. Jamila and Mira move around the space in an efficient mode, getting through the material with something that feels like a determined defiance. There's a sense of obligation. Part of the fascination with this work is the visible invitation to the audience to watch the extended performance capacities of these women, and, at the same time, a feeling of retraction, of jaw-jutting annoyance that the audience is there. No, it's not quite annoyance. It's like they're putting up with us, knowing that this is the contract and needing to comply but not showing any expression of enthusiasm. I struggle with it at times; I feel I'm watching adolescents at their dance show when it's not cool to do a dance show any more but really, underneath their teenage posturing, they do really like dancing and they do really like being watched dancing. It's a tussle in my spectatorship. It produces in me the same slightly embarrassed feeling which arises when I happen upon a television singing competition like *X Factor*, wherein there's a question about the reasons for the (so far) amateur singer's presence: are they there because they're excellent? Because they want to be a star? Because their families or friends kept prodding them to apply? Because there's a sob story, some hardship that has been or would be overcome, perhaps with the help of the judges or coaches? Is their singing really good? Do they even really like singing? Do they like singing, but would prefer just to do it in front of the mirror? How much have they already done it front of the mirror, and does it show? In *LAURA LAURA* as in *X Factor*, the performer's status is unstable. I can't tell why she's there, or whether I'm really supposed to be watching.

This instability arises only when I'm watching Jamila and Mira. Surely, as the professional performers, this act of performing should be straightforward for them? They should enjoy it, or at least have learned to participate in the agreement we have about them being there because they want to. Their pushing away of this agreeableness, of the idea that performing is fun and should be demonstrated as such, or at least not be actively resisted, dispels a set of assumptions about why a non-professional performer should engage in such a project. Jamila and Mira, in separate conversations, each describe their coming together as being based partially on the fact that they both experience significant tensions in the act of performing. They like dancing; they like building structures for that dancing; they like thinking through and practising with the questions about what a body in front of others might mean. But being this body in front of others is fraught for each of them. As a consequence, they also raise the question of what it is to invite someone else into that process *without* the offer of the delight of performing. In *Artificial Hells*, Claire Bishop describes the work of Santiago Sierra, uses the term 'delegated performance' to discuss these gallery-based works in which the artist pays people of lower socio-economic status to undertake tasks such as being tattooed or sitting in a box for several hours. The participants in these works are understood

as the delegates of the named artists, breaking a tradition of author-performers, of which Marina Abramović is the poster woman, and through which the artist outsources authenticity (2012). I don't know how any of the four women would describe their class status, but in this performance there is a sense of delegation in the structure, in the fact that the second two take the place of the first, that they emulate in their own way a set of actions which are not about formal compliance but some kind of psychophysical consonance. I do think the economics matter: Jamila and Mira are not hotshot visual artists with representation and selling works on an art market in the way Sierra does, but they are paid more for their time to put this version of the work together than Alison and Sara are. Because the offer is not one to do with financial exchange—Alison and Sara were paid a contribution to expenses more than a true wage—the similarity to Sierra's work breaks, for, in at least some of his works, the point that the delegated performers are paid minimum wage is part of the meaning-making of the art work. So, unlike Sierra's participants, Alison and Sara are there neither for the cash nor for the pleasure of performing. Because the payment is small, there is a sense in which something about this experience should be enjoyable for the participants, but ina can't promise this, because it's not what's in it for them. As such, the motivation for Alison's and Sara's participation hovers between or beyond these normative, socially acceptable reasons for doing things.

In this, and in the very presentation of *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration*, the artists demand a repurposing of the gathering of new kin which appears to be about the kinship itself, rather than the activity the companions do together. Indeed, this is made clear when thinking about the selection process: a call was put out through Yorkshire Dance's networks which described the potential performers as two people who identified as women, who were already friends but not lovers, and where at least one of them was not a professional performer. The last criterion was mine, or rather, necessary for the frame of the festival—a previous iteration of the work had had two other professional dancers act as the doubles, and this would not have been suitable for Juncture. I had asked ina to make this version with non-professional dancers especially. The performance is itself about women's experience of things associated with women, or with roles women find themselves taking on. The fact of being friends is what strikes me as special: it is what made Jamila's and Mira's collaboration what it was, and it seems that, for them, it was also crucial to the composition of the performance. Friendship is knotty, complicated, and, according to the accounts of the artists, this appeared for everyone in the studio, friendship becoming kinship as each pairing created a significant otherness, a companionship of performing without needing to perform companionship. On stage—or rather in the long rectangular space of Live Art Bistro, where the audience sits around the edge of a white dancefloor—this complex kinship is present in the refined choreography of

relation, produced through a series of shifts of both spatial relation and eye contact. In some moments, the two performers, either pair, occupy the same physical territory, either finding the same trajectories around the space, following the same pathways, or directly collecting near one another. At other moments they are apart, but all the while the charge is present: this performance is actually, in some part, *about* the two of them being two, of being in a relationship of significant otherness, a term which Haraway claims 'won't do for human sexual partners' and is 'little better to house the daily meanings of cobbled together kin relations in dogland' (96). She admits her worry about words is too much, that ultimately this term will do to indicate what is happening. And what in performance-land, dance-land, that is, the stage? The stage is the place where the pair—Jamila and Mira, or Alison and Sara—can act out different forms of companionship, indicated by their gazes: the gaze of tribal togetherness, both against or towards the audience; the gaze of independence, each focused on her own actions, but both together; and, most starkly in *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration*, particularly in the opening episode of the performance, the gaze of direct contact, in which each woman meets her companion's gaze, staring, ignoring the others present in favour of her significant other. And what in performance-land, dance-land, that is, the rehearsal studio? I wasn't there, but I heard: friendship was stretched, arguments were had. It was here, more than on the stage, that the friendship of daily life became the kinship of sharing an artistic process, sharing dancing, sharing the connection that comes only when there are two and nobody else can do it and the performance is tomorrow.

Pop music is key in this work; the music scaffolds the structure. Rihanna. Dolly Parton. Britney Spears. Women. Recognisable sounds, lyrics, harmonies. Music from a nightclub. Music from a different performance. Music from YouTube or TV. Upbeat music. Melancholy music. Brief music, music short enough for radio, though probably longer than anything anyone would watch a snippet through social media. Neat vignettes, movements of a symphony, with distinct aural, spatial, and corporeal themes, distilled and contained in different ways by each pop track. To one of these tracks, one of the least recognisable, at least to me with a relatively limited knowledge of pop music, the pair performs a dance that looks the most like a choreographed dance, with neat movements done in time with the music and, more importantly, in unison with one another. Jamila and Mira's movements are quick and syncopated, swifts runs and straight-armed turns landing in lunges, like Limón technique done by Cunningham dancers. It is precise, and difficult, not only in vocabulary but in the strange rhythms, cutting through the steady bass-drum beat. Alison and Sara's dance has the same quality but is much slower. They look nervous, and falter. Where Jamila and Mira were at perpendicular angles to one another, the movement being seen in 360° wherever a spectator was sitting, Alison and Sara faced one another, eyes on the prize, that is, her significant

other. The difference is noticeable and notable, giving each relationship a different sense of history and connection. Alison and Sara need to look at one another, to stay together; I read Jamila and Mira's tangential angles as a demonstration of a significant otherness that no longer needs direct contact: each is embedded in one another's 'personal-historical natureculture' through a decade or more of significant otherness (99). They may no longer be friends—tangles in a shared network of friends caused a seemingly irrevocable rift not long before Juncture—but on stage, ina are one another's significant others.

To one of the pop tracks they sing. At opposite ends of the performance area, Jamila and Mira take up positions behind microphones on stands. I can't remember if they look at one another, but I'm certain they don't do the cruise-ship or pub entertainer work of casting gazes around, making eye contact with particular audience members for key musical or lyrical moments. I don't see any head-throwings-back, any gestures of arms or hands or fingers, any eyebrow-raises for high notes or jaw-drops for low. It's not that they're locked in, bodies tightly composed—this is no Kraftwerk parody, or homage. They're holding the microphones in the stands and moving a little, but it's a low-key karaoke. The track is playing, and they're singing along with the recording.

Like the *X Factor* context, karaoke seems to produce some recognisable characters which each singer can assume. There's the show-off, the genuinely talented singer who knows it and wants to make sure everyone else does, too. A gift doesn't have to mean peacocking though, as another version might be to demonstrate vocal ability for the very pleasure in the feeling and the sound, or maybe to surprise unsuspecting onlookers. Some karaoke singers seem not to know the audience is there, turning away and concentrating on their own actions without attendance to their effects. Others are purposefully or knowingly bad, enjoying rousing the crowd with theatrics or comically terrible singing. Jamila and Mira don't quite satisfy any of these, as they sing reasonably accurately but not with any particular excellence. They're in tune but there's no great riffing, no tonal excitement, no 'making it their own'. It's not as though their singing isn't good, but it's more like not-not-good than good, and this is quite the point, as I see it. They use their singing to bring themselves into the background and continue to perform. They haven't relinquished their responsibility to the audience, and are still providing material for spectatorial engagement, but they've put themselves spatially and formally in the side-lines, occupying a conspicuous periphery.

Jamila and Mira are, here, backing singers. Like all good backing singers, they are attentive to both each other and the audience, but mostly their focus is on the star. Here this star comes in the form of a guest performer who emerges from her seat—the performance is in the round, or in the oval

when it was at Live Art Bistro in Leeds during Juncture—and begins her dance. The first time I saw *LAURA LAURA* this guest performer was the dancer Stephanie McMann. She is a very well-known dancer in the UK independent dance scene and had been working with Jamila and Mira on the show, so it was only later that I discovered that she had been asked but ten minutes before the performance to take this cameo role. Steph wore all black, including the lace-up, platformed boots I'd seen her wear throughout that winter, but for bright orange socks that peeked out between trouser hem and boot top when she bent her legs enough. It was entirely plausible as costume. Her dance was a wriggly one, half club groove, half the detailed improvisational work for which she is known. As I remember she used the space quite distinctly, sticking in a spot for a while, then choosing another for a more full-bodied dance. I love watching Steph dance, and loved watching this, a dance danced by an in-demand dancer of the British independent scene for her profound skill and stage charisma, gingerly grooving to the quotidian singing-along of two of her friends. In this I felt that Jamila and Mira were enacting a rite of support, singing a mantra whilst their friend made an offering. This was something, a ritual, a procedure, a dance, between the three of them to which the audience was allowed to bear witness but it wasn't for us. In a different way than in the sections with the virtuosic dancing, the spectators were not being addressed, the invitation remaining open but limited. The actions were for them, for those doing, but that doing would not have fulfilled itself had it not been in the presence of others. In some ways a wedding is a good analogy: the rite can be undertaken with couple, legal witnesses and official alone, but most people choose to have an audience in attendance not only for the benefit of a knees-up afterwards but because the ceremony itself is imbued with a different resonance due to the presence of onlookers.

At Juncture, I was surprised to find myself, moments before the performance began, being asked to take the cameo role for Alison and Sara's iteration. The moment comes. The two Leeds performers, Alison and Sara, take up their spots at microphones at either end of the oval. They begin to sing:

Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Joleeeeeeene I'm beggin' of you please don't take my man. Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Joleeeeeeene Oh please don't take him just because you can.

I am excited by the music. I like Dolly Parton. (I prefer her, the original, version of 'I Will Always Love You', but this will do.) I'm wearing a long-sleeved, floor-length 1970s dress, brown and black with flowers and squares, with a white shirt buttoned-up underneath. So far, so seventies. I find the era-matching pleasing, and the long skirt gives me something to work with. Best of all, I'm shod

with my favourite shoes ever, a pair of white, fringed cowboy boots with a black sole. I start my dance with some joking around, showing off the footwear and oom-pah-pahing my dress, gathering the skirt and pumping my arms in time with the music. I skip around the dancefloor, chuck in a grapevine, and lose the will to continue. Jogging? I start jogging around the stage, feeling embarrassed. The spectators, most of whom I am familiar with because of the festival if not due to professional crossings-of-path before, were chuckling at the beginning, likely more to the surprise of the festival's curator suddenly appearing within one of the performances than because I was doing anything especially amusing. But these flashes of delight don't last and I'm left with a good two minutes of dawdling on stage. I can't make eye contact as I'd like to. I feel undirected. Am I doing it right?

My connection to the work, to Alison and Sara, is *too* partial. It's too distant to feel that sense of support, of connection, of kinship on stage. They are significant others to one another, and I am not. Companion species—and here, we feel like different species, or, rather, I feel they are of a different species to me or me to them—is a relation that is produced actively by addressing the partial connections, by investing in shared histories. This is too brief, too sudden, or maybe of the wrong order. When I watch others—all professional dancers—take this cameo role, I am struck by their difference from the ones singing. They are so confident, so easy with themselves in this improvisation, being all known improvisers. I am not really a trained dancer, not in the sense of having been to dance school, and though I do improvise in my work I'm not an *improvisor*. My embarrassment and hesitation connects me to Alison and Sara, their rough singing sounding out in the same combination of enthusiasm and fear as I felt I was emitting. But there is something wrong in this companion species relation: I am one and I feel them as two. For a real companion species relation, each subject must stand for themselves, however contingently, each relation is itself, and I am too disconnected from them as individuals to make it ring true. My being othered—not significantly othered, just made other by the surprise guest appearance—makes their just-enough partial connection stronger still.

I have been writing about this performance largely beginning with the version performed by Jamila and Mira. This is because that's how I see it, or rather saw it: I saw *LAURA LAURA* before its eventual doubling. At Juncture, though, ina decided to present Alison and Sara's version of the work first. According to Mira, this was not an easy decision, but one made to avoid a form of comparison occurring in which the originators were read as the exemplar, not quite lived up to by the new performers. Of course, whichever way this double-bill, or any double-bill, was organised, a comparison would arise; this way just produced a set of excitements and difficulties different from the other

way around. Alison and Sara coming first disrupted the expectation, particularly on the first of the two nights on which the performance was undertaken. Here, Alison and Sara were extraordinarily nervous, unsure of themselves and one another and all of us there, watching them, at the opening performance of the festival. I recognised in myself a feeling of watching a community dance or youth dance performance, in which my role as spectator is to be a cheerleader and supporter, to be there for them, a good watcher in the way that people prize good listeners. I wanted them to enjoy themselves. They were clearly not enjoying themselves, struck with some kind of terror that charged the space. When Mira and Jamila entered for the second round, their attitude amplified this charge and rounded it into completion, the terror becoming resignation or power. I didn't feel the need to cheer for these dancers. The relation between the two sets of dancers was complex and rich, neither capitulating to the needs of the other or of some external norms from either professional or community dance about what the correct ethical relation might be between these pairs or between the performers and the audience. They were engaged in the metaplasmic action of the companion species relation, in which, as Haraway describes, the situation underwent remodelling or remoulding. Metaplasm, she writes, is the transformation of a word, or the remodelling of (dog and human) flesh, the remoulding of the codes of life. The energetic, psychic, emotional tension within this first Leeds version of *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration* constituted an activation of a metaplasm where professional dance and community dance were engaged in an accident, a tripping up, a misstep or mispronunciation. This produced a new space in which in their difference the four performers were deeply involved in significant otherness, making each other other and significant, an ethics of everyone doing what's right for them but always with the other included in that: an ethics of inseparable otherness.

The second night of the work was totally different. Suddenly confident and assured, Sara and Alison found their feet in their version of the performance. They swayed more generously to the music, stomped around the space, taking control. They were enjoying themselves. Phew! A huge relief. Their half of the bill felt joyous, despite my anxious guesting. Mira and Jamila, in contrast, seemed even more cold and distant, even more tense and harsh. Later, Mira told me how difficult it was to enter into that cheerful world and enact the performance they thought they'd made, with an agenda and tone they thought they'd made clear. It collapsed the doubling into a binary, in which a community or amateur version preceded the real-deal, where the superficiality of stereotypical tone became the only way to read the relation. Jamila and Mira each told me that they had been disappointed that Sara and Alison's version had ended up that way, that it undid what the artwork as artwork sought to do. In this, professional and community dance, the roles of the professional and the amateur, of supporter and supported fell, not *away*, into a benign space of

possibility, but *into* one another. They fell violently, limbs breaking, foreheads bashing. This is not a metaplasmic stumbling where potent transformation of ethics can take place, but a blunt throwing of one against the other, and, in this, the relation of significant otherness breaks apart. Jamila and Mira are no longer the companions of Alison and Sara but are simply a different set of beings altogether.

Training Grounds: *Assembly*

Let me indulge, for a moment, the possibility of direct analogies, as a way to move through them to more nuanced or abstracted terrain. I'll go for the stupidest: if the human in Haraway's set-up is the professional artist, then the dog or dogs must be the non-professional performer. In some ways this plays out: it is the choreographer who knows what will happen, who sets up how the day will work, what activities will occur when, will provide guidance and boundaries and limitations. This is clear in Nicola Conibere's *Assembly*. To elucidate, here is a description of my experience of seeing it for the first time:

I have a soft feeling about that viewing experience, a sense of feeling small in the cavernous space with its pleasing wooden floorboards. I didn't notice that a woman walked in at the same time as me, on the other side of the tape marking audience from performers, and from the other side of the room, from behind a curtain at what would be called in a theatre stage right. I watched the performers broadly. I know there were 23, not because I counted and remembered, but because, in her PhD thesis, Nic writes that that was how many performers there were (Conibere 2015). I watched them as I would watch any other bunch of people on a stage: I looked at them, took in their many different ages and sizes, made a reading of their multiple genders. I looked at their clothes, all neatly turned out, but everyday. I looked at the way they moved. I looked at all of these things as they walked, turned their heads, self-consciously swung their arms, and energetically danced as if to very fast music at a disco. If I was looking at them as I would look at anybody who is doing things for me to look at, they did not reciprocate according to any code I knew: there was no fourth wall, no gazing to the back seats, no 'casual' eye contact common in lots of experimental theatre. For quite a while I couldn't understand what was happening. I didn't know what was creating the comfortable but unusual tone.

One of my fellow audience members left, and a performer also left, drawing a line of opposing tension across the space which this time was obvious to me from my spectatorial position. Another

visitor left, again triggering a reduction in the performing cast by one. And then someone came in, drawing one of the recent leavers back in to join her fellow performers. The structure of the relationships became clear to me, and, in that, the mystery of the relational tone was solved: each performer was associated with a spectator, and that association is retained throughout. I could now see that one of the performers was 'mine': her body was subtly engaged in attention towards me, her gaze meeting mine. She was keeping an eye on me. She was keeping an eye on me as she shunted backwards on her bottom, legs straightish, reaching the back wall and then walking forwards to begin again. She was keeping an eye on me as she walked side to side. This could be like a pantomime dame or cabaret performer or boyband star making an audience member feel special by holding their gaze or reaching out to them, 'the seduction of the spectator by the wiles of the performer,' as Yvonne Rainer famously described (1965). But it wasn't. This wasn't a star, made larger-than-life by costume and makeup and music and celebrity, but a woman I'd never seen before and would maybe never see again, doing some movements with some others and welcoming me with her attention. There is no talent-show stagecraft in this: I am not being seduced by this person's extra special skills or finely-honed charisma, but drawn in by the intersection of the choreography, including everything, and the fact that this person is not a professional dancer or, at least, not doing anything that might indicate that she is a professional dancer.

To make this casual, easy connection happen whilst a set of movements are also in action, there is detailed work behind the scenes. The week before the performance in Leeds, I finish participating in a workshop as Nic enters the same studio to begin a rehearsal. She and her assistant get out a flipchart on which there are charts and lists. I don't know what this is for, until Nic tells me that, in order to have the performance fulfil its gently changing choreography, as a performer enters they mark which action they will choose to do. They select from a prescribed vocabulary, learned and practised in rehearsal. After recording their choice, entering the space and beginning the action, the other performers make their way to join them, meaning that the choreographic content changes as often as a new performer enters the space, triggered themselves by a new audience member. There are further cues to activate changes of spatial formation, also noted before stepping in. The decision the performer has made offstage, based on their response to a written record of what has happened without them, is how the choreography shifts. All of this is very formal. Nothing that happens on the stage is about exercising the individual or group creativity, not about each person's life trials or identity expression. As such, I could describe *Assembly* as putting to task ideas of what freedom is in relation to performing: it frames a performer's creative contribution as the decisions they make within the common, prescribed structure and makes explicitly visible these decisions only in relation to those of others.

Like ina's work, *Assembly* is interested in being received as a professional artwork, whose purpose is to have a relationship to a visiting audience more than satisfy the expressive needs of the participating performers. This is supported by the fact that Nic is careful in any kind of promotion or marketing that 'trades on', in her words, the fact that the performers are non-professionals (she relaxed this stipulation for Juncture, as she felt the festival's critical frame would serve to evade the simplification that could otherwise occur). Indeed, she imagines a future version, which, well-resourced, could be performed by experienced or trained, that is, fully paid dancers; nothing about the work's purpose is tied up with the non-professional status of the performers. However, she says that should this professionals-only version be possible, the cast would comprise performers of different ages, body sizes and so on; the need to state this revisits an observation about professional dance's regrettably limited on-stage workforce, a state of play which community dance resists and counteracts. I don't see Nic's desire to make something this way as a meeting-in-the-middle; rather, I consider *Assembly* a choreographic structure which facilitates the arising of questions and observations about who is in and who is out in work and non-work.

In my analogy, then, Nic is the human and the dancers—whoever they are—the dogs. It is Nic who sets the terms of the engagement, decides to a large degree what will happen when, and creates environments in which the others are encouraged via various means to do those things that Nic has decreed. In a relatively long section of her short text, Haraway describes the training methods of two very different dog training experts. Despite their differences in approach—one carrot, the other stick—each begins with the point of view that the dog must be engaged on their own terms with the action in hand in order for the shared activity to be successful. It is still a human idea of success: in terms of the sport of agility, wherein humans lead dogs around an obstacle course through which the dog runs, jumps and ducks, it is a human judge who sets the course and decides if the human-dog dyad has done it according to human-prescribed rules.

In *Assembly*, Nic is similarly required to train the performers. It feels strange to use a term so educative, so vocational: it suggests a future outcome that will be productive for the participant, that they will be transformed in such a way that will be useful for them. It is also a highly unfashionable term to describe the relationship between an artist and performers, the seemingly-equitable foregrounded through something that appears benign or even, like 'collaborators'. This is the case for community arts, in which the exchange should be between equals in a process where the skills, knowledge and experience of the community participants are primary in the activity or creative production, the role of the artist meeting that status through their skills in facilitating the situation. And the 'collaboration' between authoring artist and fellow performing artist is also

understood in much contemporary dance and performance as a meeting of equals undertaking different but socially equal roles. In *Assembly*, the efficacy necessary to transmit a complex work over a few evening and weekend rehearsals—that is, sitting within the support system of community dance—makes for questioning of the authenticity of that relation. To be explicit: there is no ethical or ontological hierarchy between the author and the performers, just as there is no ethical or ontological hierarchy between human and dog, or any other form of 'companion species relating under the sign of significant otherness' (Haraway 2003: 48). But there is a social one, in the sense of the sociality of the specific environment of the artwork's creation and presentation; significant otherness is neither predicated on nor prescribes social equity (45). Unlike *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration*, *Assembly* was created with the specific context of production with non-professionals in mind, which meant in this case that the choreographer needed to establish a hierarchical relationship in which she has and knows the performance and must teach—another term unfashionable when referencing the working together within artistic production—it to the performers, rather than be in a situation of co-creation. This would be the case even if the performers were professionally-trained, that is, trained before Nic's training of them in the doing of *Assembly*. This performance's negotiation of the terms of what looks like community dance exposes the masking of complex and hierarchical relationships in all kinds of dance-as-art through the use of forms that sit far from community dance tropes.

If they are being trained, the performers should be able to do something they couldn't before. Of course, this is true, for they will be able to do a performance of a detailed and nuanced choreographic work. They are not, however, trained to do some special movements, for the content is in the realm of everyday actions, though does require everyone to be able to walk, sit, stand, lie down and do various actions to move between and within these orientations. This may seem like an act of deskilling, to set up a situation of learning where the material doesn't challenge: Jen Harvie critiques such situations as related to the deskilling of workforces under neoliberalism (2013). Returning to the dog and their trainer, the dog already knows how to jump and run; it is the trainer's job to organise this in a specific way. The cast of *Assembly* is trained in a particular sort of awareness, an ability to make eye contact, to notice one another, and to be alert to 'otherness-in-relation' (Haraway 2003:50), just as the dog is asked to be when training for agility competitions. Nic is clear that in her rehearsal process there is time made for the assembled company to be together, spend time talking and drinking tea. Part of the training is the bonding, the being together and forming trusting relationships that could be called companionate. Nic is the significant other exemplar in this situation, in specific and concrete singular relationships with each participant. And, at the same time, she represents 'artist' in a relationship of significant otherness

to the 'participants', as categories, breeds, or species. The training is not just one-way, not even because there is a hierarchy and something that seems like a transmission, a pouring of information from one site to another, a way of describing that would have any thinker of radical pedagogy quaking. Nic, in these less formal encounters, is absorbing the ways in which she can satisfy the needs of the participants, needs which in turn change the way in which she asks them to meet her instructions. She, like the dog trainers, has a 'focused attention on what the dogs [or the participants] are telling them' (48). In this, there is something educative, though not in the sentimental sense often attributed to community arts in which facilitator and participant, or choreographer and performer, are learning from one another in a bilateral flow. It's not even just that they're each learning something else through the encounter with one another, though I'm sure this is part of it. I will follow from Donna Haraway to suggest that in the relational practice of training, all participants are remodelled (54); everyone becomes a different shape as a result of companion species relating. It is the relational practice itself, despite and because of its hierarchy, that facilitates a shift in what everyone is to one another.

This remodelling in the rehearsal room has an impact on the kind of relating available to the performers during the presentation of *Assembly*. The kind of companion species relation instigated by Nic ripples through the participants from space to space, making a new kind of significant otherness to be engendered during the performance. It seems a stretch to apply a theory of kinship to a relationship between strangers which could last only moments, but the delicacy of the manner in which a performer comes to be assigned to a spectator midst the groups, as if one from each family come together to gather a bigger set of relations, just for that moment, directs me to this thinking. The performers have been remodelled by their training, and they can go on to lead the spectators to develop that relation once more, with a different tenor, with a different spatiality and temporality. This is ultimately Haraway's goal in her theory: she is looking for forms of relating in which there is an expansion beyond the intimacy of kin:

> The task is to become coherent enough in an incoherent world to engage in a joint dance of being that breeds respect and response in the flesh, in the run, on the course. And then to remember how to live like that at every scale, with all the partners.
>
> (Haraway 2003:62)

Work: *Swarm Sculptures*

The choreography is simple but careful: from the outside it appears that, at random moments, the group of around 15 performers shift from pacing around the space to forming a heap of bodies, attached cheek to cheek or as close to that as possible. This is not always smooth, and they don't always make it, forehead coming to shoulder instead, or a straggling participant coming in to fill a gap. Once the sculpture is formed, it disintegrates, and the performers disperse, before the system is repeated in only slightly varying ways.

In *Swarm Sculptures* by Lucy Suggate, some performers really look like they're working. In a dance performance, this need not be something that appears as working like a dog, but it has its own qualities. I notice one performer in particular as she walks around the ground floor gallery of the Tetley art gallery with her chest up, trainered feet slightly turned out, walking purposefully, moving through her whole foot heel-toe. I notice her because of this, because she is different from the others in the projection of herself, but also *because* she is projecting. She is using the skills of the performer to attract the attention of the spectator. It's seduction of the sort dancers learn from the get-go, even as toddlers; I remember learning about it by watching seven-year-old dancers when I was five. I get the impression that this performer's seduction could be by accident, a series of bodily habits that amount to her looking like a dancer doing her job. It stands out.

By contrast, the others don't look so much like they're working. They are engaged and diligent. They follow the score. They're working, but they're not showing-working, not showing-dancing. Lucy, the choreographer, walks around and quietly mutters numbers which appear to be directions. She makes sure that the instructions are audible to the cast, neither disguising them nor announcing them to the spectators. I can't be sure that anyone who didn't know Lucy or that she was the choreographer would notice her doing this, but I do, and I note the gentle authority with which she speaks these numbers; I read them as reminders more than demands. Given these features, it's not that work isn't conjured as a frame of reference for this performance, but that the quality within it disrupts the possibility of reading it as such, which is why a more dance-workerly mode jars.

This could be read as exploitation, the workers working but not seeming to because of the tenderness, collectivity and care they show to one another and to the others present and to the space at large. A nice atmosphere produced by a clever bit of ambient electronic music could easily disguise hard labour, alienated labour, even. It would be an error to miss content here, and structure,

by which I mean choreography. Navigating the very differences of the proposals by different bodies, different people, appears to be the work that is at stake; it's physical labour imbued with Berardi's 'soul', with forces of 'mind, language and creativity' but not subservient to them (2009:21). The soul has been at work in a set of relations that happened in the rehearsal, the intellectual and interpersonal demands of intimacy within the artificiality of a concatenated period of creative process. This is the demand within any kind of artistic experience, whether or not it would be presented in a professional performance; I associate this feeling of needing to work with people who are very different to me, with different reasons for doing what we're doing, just as much with my experiences of youth and community dance from various points of view. In professional performances I have made, such as *Recreation*, I have chosen my collaborators or have been chosen by them. There is an agreement about why we are there, even if it is not identical, and this sustains us through our exchange of intimate, creative forces: the meetings of our souls. When I have been involved in community dance—as a facilitator as well as in a participatory role—these meetings have often been more difficult, as we each navigate our reasons for being there (creative outlet, healthy movement, social interaction, development towards professional practice and so on) while jostling with one another's. Our souls are doubly at work.

The fact that it is a performance, rather than a process without a public outcome, matters. This is not just my perspective; writer and choreographer Heidi Wilson discusses a range of views regarding the importance of performance in community dance which can be helpful in thinking about why the performance matters. These include the demonstration of new skills, to extend the process of the community dance experience, to celebrate achievements and to satisfy or boost the profile of the activity to funders and stakeholders (2008). None of these are the purpose of this performance, this performance which takes place in the milieu of professional dance activity. I have two alternatives which relate to these benefits of community dance performance but have a partial connection with the goals of professional dance performance, drawing professional dance and community dance into significant otherness through the performance, rather than the process. First, I would like to remind myself that performing—despite Jamila's and Mira's experiences—can often be very pleasurable. I know some of the things I like about it: I like the anticipation; I enjoy the strange fear and anxiety about doing things correctly or well, because it seems to matter more in front of others than just for myself or in rehearsal; I enjoy thinking about whether others are enjoying the performance or not. Performing is enjoyable for many of the people who choose to do it. It is difficult to say this because of my 'artrepreneurial' training, in which my artistic work is only valuable if it is 'real work', and 'real work' is associated with 'hard work', which should be not-pleasurable; the complications of this were explored when thinking about *LAURA LAURA*

Double Penetration, above. Paradoxically, or almost-paradoxically, the second and perhaps most important reason that making this process one with a performance turns it into something more readily experienced by others *as* work. This does not ring true for community dance performances in the way that it does for work made by a professional choreographer, and, crucially, presented within or by an arts organisation as part of their main programme. When this is the case, as it was with all the works in Juncture as well as *Recreation*, the performance is considered an artwork, the product of work, the enacting of work. A production is a product, made by work.

This confluence of the appearance of work and pleasure, albeit with strong residues of false binaries and superficial suppositions, is presented before others; one of the things a performance always does is that it points to a set of human activities and says, 'this is important, look at this'. It's not just that the fact of the performance matters in relation to a creative process beyond a rehearsal room. It's also that a performance makes things matter; human beings choose to make artworks and put them before others because the things in them are important to them (and many other, more or less cynical reasons, of course). So, in putting non-professional dancers in a performance makes their actions important before others, before a public, before a society. Those actions, made important, are ones full of work, but a work that has come to shake off some of its associations with alienation through its position in the recreational life of the performers—and in any case these performers have not received a wage but travel expenses only—and with the negative impacts of work, some of which were discussed in part in Chapter 1. This is what I find so important about these works made by professional choreographers with non-professional performers: they make important a kind of being and doing which complicates the questions of work and its opposites, and facilitate a dynamism in both experiences and understandings of recreation, of voluntary non-work activity, that I do not find so easily elsewhere. In so doing, they not only conjure work and recreation in relation, but, just as training did for the subjectivities of trainer and trainee in *Assembly*, remodel each in concept and in practice, in 'flesh and sign' (Haraway 2003: 25)

This way of seeing the nature of this activity opens up a space to see work beyond the boss-worker relationship beyond domination and exploitation. Indeed, turning again to Donna Haraway's examination of canine-human relations, it is now possible to relate the performers to Border Collies, a breed of dogs who are famous as working sheepdogs and triumph in the sport of agility. These dogs need to work; the breed has been genetically manipulated over centuries of dog-human relationships. Border Collies need to work so much that new owners, enthusiastic to cohabit with an obedient, intelligent animal, find themselves unable to provide the work necessary and

often give up their companion. Humans have not been artificially reared to find states of non-work unbearable, at least not genetically so, but that willing people participate in a contemporary dance work—which, critically, does not promise the same outcomes of personal transformation and social cohesion as can be found in community dance's lists of aims and objectives—suggests strongly that some people do want to do some kind of work, even when it is not economic work, even when it is not in any direct or immediately comprehensible way socially or economically valuable. The motivation for these things isn't as simple as it being enjoyable, or as it being a chance to express something singular and personal: *Swarm Sculptures*, like the other works in this chapter as well as *Recreation*, does not offer this kind of fun. *Swarm Sculptures* offers the chance to do something that seems a lot like a type of work, maybe even is a type of work, but without the wrappings of economy and social status. I don't imagine that this is conscious in the thinking of participants, and Lucy never mentioned this as a motivation, but the work and projects like it appear to appeal to an aspect of human will which is not satisfied by the usual divisions of work, play and rest.

All of this permits a refiguring of the companion species relation between Lucy and the performers. Haraway reminds the reader, and maybe herself: 'If I have a dog, my dog has a human' (2003: 54). If the choreographer has performers, then, the performers have a choreographer, and nobody is the dog. If the boss has workers, the workers have a boss. This can be refracted through prisms of either delegation, as suggested by Claire Bishop, or support, as offered by Shannon Jackson. Delegation, as described above in the discussion of *LAURA LAURA Double Penetration*, suggests that someone of a higher status or position in the relation passes on a part of their work to someone of a lower status or position in the relation. It could be assumed that Lucy is delegating to performers: she knows what is supposed to happen and is getting the dancers to do it. But the choreography of *Swarm Sculptures*, which is predicated so greatly on the specific sculptural possibilities of particular bodies, of particular people, disturbs this supposition. Instead, it is the performers who have the experience of their bodies, with those particular lengths and depths and widths, with the harsh boniness or dense muscularity or fleshy fatness or rigid metal (in the case of the performer who uses a wheelchair), with their capacity to fold or stretch or sit or stand or lie or crumple or arc or hover. It's as if Lucy has been invited, commissioned, to sculpt these bodies into more or less harmonious shapes in the gallery space, to find ways to have these bodies make new shapes in relation to one another. Lucy has been set a puzzle by these people; they have delegated their task of self- and co-sculpting to her. In setting up the work in the way she has, she has put herself forwards for a free commission, and this is the small swarm who has taken up her offer of collective, temporary portraiture.

Delegation is not the opposite of support but a different view of the same thing. The dancers are supporting Lucy and her work. They are an infrastructural element as much as any material could be; they support the work just as an actor supports their character (Jackson 2011). The work can't exist without them. They hold it up, just as the pillars of the gallery hold up the ceiling. At the same time, Lucy supports the performers. I could read the alphanumerical directives she mutters as she perambulates through the space, through the performance, not as instructions but as spoken support, offerings of help to alleviate some of the mental effort of taking part in the performance to allow for other priorities to arise in the performing: a sense of care, awareness of space, attention to all other people there present. She holds the performance up, through holding the performers up. I am not interested, here, in obliterating what seems like facts of the matter: that it is Lucy's work, that she benefits from having the credit, from something like a contribution to a career (though given that she has since stepped back from choreographing due to a despondency with such systems I'm not sure she would see it in the same way). I know that this is the dominant way—the economic way—to look at these relations and I can see its importance. I am not directing attention to what appear to be gentler ways of dealing with this performance to be softer or kinder, but because I see these values as being equally present in the material, even if perceptual biases would have them seem secondary or lower. Support might seem like a kinder lens but it is no less complex. Drawing back to Haraway and her discussion of agility and a dog's training for the sport, she follows the dog trainer Vicki Hearne to propose that in the companion species relation of training, of educating and facilitating skills in the canine significant other, is 'a place to increase the dog's power to claim rights against the human' (2003: 53). Translating this to *Swarm Sculptures*, and pulling together language of work, delegation and support, the situation of creating and presenting a performance 'enfranchises' the relationship (2003: 53): it empowers the dancers to have rights in relation to the choreographer, and, by extension, over the artwork, its reception, its audience and so on. This is dependent on neither equality—again, I will emphasise the various hierarchies present in these relations in line with the canine-human dyad—nor fixity, but in a delicate, resilient, responsive mutuality.

I have a photograph of my friends Sara and Jim watching *Swarm Sculptures*. Sara is standing and leaning gently against a pillar; the back of her body is the centre of the shot. Jim sits against the back wall, facing me, his hands clasped around folded knees. Each looks to their left, to different sculptures made by two halves of the swarm. The photograph is of Sara and Jim, not of the sculptures, so all I see in the image is a jumble of legs and bums and backs and heads; it's not good documentation of the performance for marketing or archival purposes but it exposes layers of support. It shows the physical support: the shiny floor and the gleaming white pillars and the lights

and even a projector mount, ready for a film screening another day. It shows audience as a support for the work, in the form of Sara, who is also a support as a peer, for she is also presenting work in the festival, and in the form of Jim, who works at Dance4, the organisation which has supported the producing of *Swarm Sculptures* beyond its presentation in Juncture. If these things are the supports for the work, the work also supports them: supports their need to be there, doing the work that they do, as artists, arts workers, and even as the physical space of an institution: if there is no art, the institution can't exist. Each relationship of support, of significant otherness, produces rights in each party. These are not the rights of employment, of legal, contractual engagement, but exist beyond work as it is understood in these terms.

Nonetheless all these relations *are* work: they are dependent on and only produced by purposeful effort, by an attention to the creation of (non-economic) value, by sharing these efforts and attentions for the benefit of others. The confluence of all these processes of mutual support is dependent on neither chance nor sentiment: it is not something like love or compassion or care or hope that allows these systems of support to come into being and produce an artwork. It is work. Haraway discusses this in terms of the work that a dog does as a pet or as a livestock guardian: the dog is more deeply connected and their life preserved not because of fleeting affection but because their efforts are needed and wanted in the natureculture in which they find themself. There is something solid about this, assuring, at least as a maker of performance: it is not because people like me or even like my work that it continues to be possible for it to happen, but because of a network of work which is mutually appreciated amongst the partners. Here, in a choreography danced by non-professional performers, this is heightened: these performers are not taking part because they love Lucy or care for the Tetley, but because they want to do this work and their work is wanted. Lucy is not making space for these people to dance because she loves them and wants to transform their lives but because she wants to do this work and her work is wanted by them. As much as it is heightened it is also, still, a surprise for me to find this here. It is in this space of what appears to be non-work, at least for the performers, as it is part of their recreational, spare-time life, it is work that makes itself visible. If in the last chapter I was looking for recreation in the workerly space of *Recreation*, here I find work seeping through the leisure domain. As it squeezes itself out, it can be seen in a new form making other kinds of relations, including relations of significant otherness between things or ideas as well as people.

Curating: Care

My job as curator also involved some kind of love; to curate, of course, is etymologically connected to caring, and though caring and love are far from the same thing the ideas and felt senses are held proximately and often concur. To care for this work, the work made by professional choreographers in professional settings with a non-professional cast began with being a fan—a critical fan, a fan with questions, but a fan nonetheless. Artist and scholar Owen G Parry, whose work has engaged with fandom and with fan fiction, works with the idea of fans as amateur experts (Parry 2019). This would not suit for most curators, curating being a professional job with training and status. I am not a professional curator; Juncture is always curated by a non-curator dance artist and this is emphasised in any marketing material and indeed in conversations with Yorkshire Dance, who certainly see themselves as the senior partner in matters of programming and event production. At the inception of the project—or projects, if I include both Juncture and the PhD research in its entirety—it would have been difficult to see myself as anything of an expert in the area of which I was such a fan; it is through being a fan and devoting my attentions to this work that some knowledge has been generated.

This knowledge is by no means necessary for the care needed to undertake a big curatorial project, or indeed a scholarly one. In thinking about care, Nel Noddings describes the concentric circles in which we find ourselves (2013). At the innermost circle there is our family or other immediate relationships. Beyond those people, we meet those for whom we have a 'personal regard', and outwards in layers towards total strangers. There are chains of care, cared-fors who are the ones-caring of other cared-fors, so that my caring is but one pair of links in either direction that connect to other intimacies of care, sitting in the circles of care, all of which are things I need not know about. Where Noddings' begins with the privacy of a one-to-one relationship to imagine the wider ripples of care, I began my thinking with an investment in a field of work. Rather than begin caring for a singular artwork, artist, situation, organisation or participant-performer, I found myself caring deeply for an area of work on which I could find pretty much no study or serious curatorial or scholarly work. I cared about what this work was and why it was positioned in a margin between community and professional dance, a margin right in the middle of things rather than on the edges. I cared about how such choreography and its processes spoke to and within a context where to work or not to work is not so much a question but a matter of huge weight, and I cared deeply about the political situation in which the everyday lives of people are pressed against this matter. My chain of care, then, operated in something of an opposite direction, beginning at a macro level and needing to work down the chains of care to the specificity of individual choreographic works,

processes, and people. In a way, I cared more for the breed than for the dog, and I have been willing to limit my scope—focusing on very few works, all made by artists working in the experimental, independent scene—in order to preserve that care.

This thinking has been possible because of an existing connection between the foci of experimental choreographers and of community dance: an investment in what dance dramaturg Peggy Olislaegers described in a personal communication regarding *Recreation* as 'alternative excellences'. Each of the choreographers discussed here has, in the works examined as well as in their greater corpora, been interested in creating choreographic environments in which there is a resistance to normative criteria of what makes certain actions or sequences of actions performed in particular ways 'good dancing', a resistance which manifests itself in providing through the choreography alternative apparatus for the determination of excellence. This same approach is engendered by much community dance, where the success or failure of the dancing is not measured by the achievement of specific technical and physical bodily procedures. These two 'knowledge practices' find themselves in a position to 'get on together' through this partial connection (Haraway 2003:7), a pattern 'in which the players are neither wholes nor parts' (2003:8). Community dance and professional dance themselves are brought into significant otherness through these works made for professional contexts featuring non-professional dancers: they '[cobble] together non-harmonious agencies and ways of living that are accountable both to their disparate inherited histories and to their barely possible but absolutely necessary joint futures' (2003:7). In the context of Juncture, this chapter, and I think in most of the settings in which these works are found, they are located as professional dance in order to be understood as art; this is crucial, for it is here, that, as Nicolas Bourriaud describes, the space of relations is tightened, and, in so doing, the political offers of the work are made most acutely visible (1998). In professional dance we are invited to look again, with the critical apparatus not of a supporter but of an artgoer, at the relations between people, actions, and fields of action. But these relations can only be understood, can only *exist*, with and within the network of support—practical, aesthetic, ideological—that comes from community dance, including community art's and community artists' tendency to move beyond individual artistic disciplines (Kuppers and Robertson 2007; Jackson 2011).

The 'getting on together', as I've described throughout, is dependent not on a collapsing into one another but through being held apart. Shannon Jackson describes how artworks can 'measure their distance' from an artform, a phrase she borrows from Elinor Fuchs (Jackson 2011: 144, 262 note 3). The works discussed in this thesis find themselves measuring their distance from both professional and community dance, in their forms as well as in their organisation and marketing.

Their distances are not always the same, neither for each work nor for each participant nor each organisation nor each spectator. It is dynamic, fluid, making the measuring not one of fixed meterage but of a *felt sense* of nearby or over there. Turning the ideas around, I could suggest that these works are indeed a method for professional dance and community dance to measure their distance from one another, to keep themselves from falling into dysfunctional oneness and to preserve the living together that is the active othering of the companion species relation. As I have attempted to describe, it is in this measured distance, in this fluid space, that the usual practices of labouring and leisuring swim through one another, metaplasmically remodelling each other and those who undertake them.

Brief notes towards a future practice

Later this year a handful of people, no more than can sit in an average living room, will receive an invitation to a performance. The invitation will come jointly from me and someone they know, a family member, friend, colleague or neighbour, someone who does not consider themselves a professional dancer. If they wish to take us up on the invitation, they will be asked to RSVP with a description of a dish of food they will bring along with them. They will not be asked to do or provide anything else.

A month or so later, the small audience will assemble in the home of their friend, who is to be the performer. Once we have welcomed the guests with drinks and introductions, I will explain what will happen:

[Name] will soon do a performance while we watch. This performance is not the first version of this choreography; the first time it was done I did it, for some people that I chose. I have worked with your friend over a couple of days to translate the choreography so it is suitable for them, and for you. The movements are not exactly the same, because they have been chosen for this exact situation, which is not the same as any other situation, but it shares enough that we consider it the same choreographic work. After the performance, which will be around 30 minutes long, we will tuck in to our wonderful collective spread, and I will offer some ways for us to talk about the performance for a while, until we decide that enough's enough and we would like to talk about other things.

I will ask the audience if they have any questions, or if they need anything, before the dancer begins.

This new work has been activated by the previous ones. It emerges out of the research, in all its choreographic, curatorial, bibliographic and autoethnographic forms, of the past years. To think about it, to think about why I want to do it, it is helpful to review its relationship to what has come before. This text arrives where a conclusion could normally be expected, and in it there are some statements which help to put a marker in a set of processes, but these processes are continuing, through the particular new work I am introducing as well as in my life in the other ways it is lived. A conclusion, as such, seems premature. Instead, I use this text to begin to scribe the edges of interest of the new work. This is part of the choreography.

I will take a pause to take stock of some of the major themes that have arisen within what has been written so far as a way in. Most explicitly, the practices I undertook under the umbrella of the research have enabled me to think about how work as a classification of human activity is expressed within and complicated by choreography. Life appeared everywhere, from start to end of the research, escaping into parts of experience which were supposed to be called something else, often coming closer to a 'curated' 'lyf' than I would have liked. What recreation might be, and what that has to do with contemporary conversations across multiple spheres of thought about work and post-work, was tried out across choreographic and written forms. Finally, spending time with the work of others made possible ideas around the intersections and separations of community and professional dance through work and non-work. Of course, here I am providing a sort of chronological summary of the chapters preceding these notes, but as I see it the thinking on each of these themes appears throughout the thesis and the performance *Recreation*, with different elements given particular focus at different moments.

The same concerns drive the new work. I am moved by an interest in the significant otherness held between professional dance and community dance, and the socialities offered by each inhabiting the other's frames reciprocally. On the one hand, I will continue to think of this project as a choreographic work, presented as an artwork authored by a named artist. I hold onto this frame because, for the moment, it appears to help retain some of the perceived value of the work: it allows it to be engaged with as an artwork critically, it enables it to be assessed for its quality according to various metrics, which might include originality, innovation, clarity of performance, political awareness, use of time and space, rhythmic complexity, appropriateness of costume, lighting, set and sound design, customer service, marketing and many, many more. Calling something a professional artwork affords the actions held within it a value merely by announcing itself as something worthy

of attention from what could be called a general public, even when, as in this case, the public is a chosen one.

On the other hand, the location of the work in a private home offers an alternative entry point. I find myself mentally mixing up various scenes from period dramas in which some young woman is bullied into performing a recital for her parents' company. Here, a performance means the presentation of some musical, theatrical or choreographic act by a specified performer for a specified audience, where the performer and audience are understood more as differently-behaving aspects of the same group than as two separate, different entities encountering one another through a set of circumstances where one side does something for the other. In a less comedically high-class fantasy, I think about games or activities which include an element of performing, of taking or doing a turn; I think about karaoke, and charades.

What I am interested in is a glimmer of what happens in community dance performances, where the audience comes not, or not only, to satisfy their own cultural appetites, but in order to root for, support and take pleasure in the activities of a dear one. The effect of this is palpable. Being an audience member in a community dance performance—even when you're not there to see a friend—is an experience of an entirely different sort to that of watching a professional performance. It is not the same as a fellow artist or arts worker coming along to see the work of a pal or colleague; the invitation is of another order. Many friends and colleagues came to see *Recreation* and the events of Juncture, but it was at least as much to serve their own creative-critical interests as it was to cheerlead for my endeavours. When I watch a community dance performance, however, I find some of my critical, analytical modalities of thought soften, and my receptivity to the situation—the performance plus the being-audience—becomes wider. It's as if my perceptions spread out; my aim is to enjoy myself, and enjoy the enjoyment of others, and that permits a different kind of sensitivity to what is happening on stage and in the audience. It is a highly connecting atmosphere, and I rejoice in it. That doesn't mean that, as a community dance audience member, I can't think: I am always thinking, preferring some things to others, wanting to discuss a particular aspect or moment, or finding something problematic enough to offer a critique to whomever will listen to me afterwards. But those things are not the point of my activity as an audience member; instead, I am there for the performers and for the audience members in a way that I am not able to meet in a professional performance. In part, I think that this occurs because the audience is made up of nodes of specified audiences sitting next to other specified audiences. The assumption is that everyone is there for someone, and that for each performer there is an audience, waiting. Nobody is a general.

The work will be partially made and wholly presented in the domestic sphere, a sphere which has been gestured to in this thesis through the inclusion of material referring to what might be usually called my private life, but, due to the frame of the practices, was not inhabited by the work. I am interested in relocating some of the questions of this research into this environment, to realise—both in the sense of make actual and in the sense of come to see or recognise—alternative confluences and complexes of work, life, and recreation which have not yet been available in the preceding work. Though the home is usually the space of reproductive labour, a category I have not put to work in this research, it is also a space for leisure (watching films on Netflix instead of going to the cinema comes to mind) and indeed for work (I am sitting on my sofa now). As such it offers an unstable terrain onto which I wish to dance and have dancing be done, enlivening and drawing attention to the complex plurality of the space through choreography. Presenting the work in the homes of the people who will dance the work directs a compelling force of complication through the relationship between choreographer and performer, professional and non-professional, worker and non-worker, host and guest and so on. Just as I have attempted to suspend these binaries in order to see the categories anew throughout this thesis, I will continue to unsettle the classifications in this new work. In a different move from that in *Recreation*, the performers will be unpaid and I will try to make it so that I can be paid. This is not only because I need money to sustain my life while I spend my time doing projects like these, but also because in this case I want one of the variables in the relationship between me and the performers to be that of worker and non-worker; I invite the performers to do this as part of their recreational life. I'm sure it is clear by this stage in this writing that I do not think that work is designated by money, or at least not by remuneration alone, but it is an important signifier to those who might engage with the project as supporters, performers or audience members.

Despite the fact that I have spent these years and these pages articulating the complexity of the work-leisure dyad through multiple choreographic and philosophical lenses, I find myself still with a post-workist viewpoint: work as we know it—whether or not we think or feel positively about work—is under pressure. In order to think about how to work differently, or to understand how it is changing, or to find ways to use it for our own ends, or to practice forms of work beyond our assumptions, or to relate in other ways through work, or to circumscribe work in new colours, requires the creation of a space called recreation, where, even if it is produced through, by, with, because of or despite of work, other textures surface, as if rubbing charcoal over paper over something that didn't even seem knobbly in the first place.

As such, the new project continues *Recreation*'s interest in finding ways to amplify, project and

complicate the importance of activities undertaken as leisure. The work of *art*work makes this possible both despite of and through its understanding *as work*. Through this new project, I wish to continue in this murky, tantalising space, pursuing the unsolvable questions that *Recreation* and its related thinking produced. Practice-as-research here, then, is understood not as an institutional frame—the new project does not (yet) find itself in relation to any academic situation—but as the action of turning over ideas through doing: not a method undertaken to give neat answers to pre-determined questions, but the generation of new concerns by unpicking the knots of the previous ones. The ideas discussed in this thesis and presented in the choreography *Recreation* are not identical to those with which I began the research; the research itself has made it possible to think about different things than that which I expected, through its doing. The new project picks up here, and, I expect, will unfold in equally unpredictable ways. I am looking forward.

Appendices

Appendix A—Ethics Approval Statement

The research for this project was submitted for ethics consideration under the reference DAN 15/023 in the Department of Dance and was approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton's Ethics Committee on 15.09.15.

Appendix B—Example
Participant Consent Form

NB: as the participants took part in the practice element, it was most appropriate to call the project *Recreation* for the purposes of these forms.

University of Roehampton London

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: Recreation

Research background

This is research project conducted by Gillie Kleiman (the "Researcher") investigates dance work made by professional artists for professional contexts but where the performers, at least in part, might be called 'non-professionals'. This element of the research involves the creation and presentation of a performance, performed by six people. As part of the research the performance will be presented publicly, to an audience attracted through marketing and PR activities undertaken by the researcher, her colleagues, and partner organisations.

Practice

You are invited to participate in this research project as a performer. Rehearsals will take place at agreed times at publicly-funded arts organisations in specialist studios for no more than 35 hours per week, for a maximum of seven weeks. Please note that these are maximums and individual schedules will be agreed and periodically updated in separate written documentation.

As a participant-performer, you will be paid for your participation by the researcher. The University of Roehampton is not responsible for any payments or engagement of participant-performers in

this research project. In addition to this consent form, you will be required to agree to the attached agreement to be made between the research-performer and the researcher. Details of payments, including details of what happens to payments if you withdraw, are included therein.

Personal information (e.g. name, contact details) and images (still and moving photography) will be shared with the researcher's contractors (e.g. producer, documenter) for practical purposes only. Photographs and recordings of rehearsals and performances which feature your image and actions may still be used even if you withdraw; it will always be made clear when such still and moving images and audio materials are being made.

The performance and any derivatives thereof (e.g. marketing materials, images, texts, audio recordings etc.) remain the property of the researcher in perpetuity.

Interviews

You will also be invited to be interviewed. Each interview will be informal and will take no more than 90 minutes. You may be invited to participate more than once, as part of the creative research. The interviews will take place in a location agreed between you and the researcher, and will be recorded by a video camera. The processes and product of the studio-based research will also be recorded via video and stills photography. The video files and transcripts will be stored securely under processes complying with University of Roehampton Data Protection Policy. The data from the practical research and from interviews will be used in the Researcher's PhD thesis, and may be used for future publication by the Researcher.

Please inform the researcher if there are any concerns. The University staff whose information is detailed below may also be contacted.

Researcher's Contact Details:

Gillie Kleiman
Department of Dance
University of Roehampton
Roehampton Lane
London
SW15 5PU

kleimang@roehampton.ac.uk

07886402267

Consent Statement:

I agree to take part in this research, and am aware that I am free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason, although if I do so I understand that my data might still be used. I understand that data will be collected and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and with the University's Data Protection Policy.

I understand that due to the nature of the project my participation will not be anonymous.

Name ……..

Signature ……

Date ……

Image Consent Statement:

I agree that my image will be recorded via moving and still photography. These images will be used for research, documentation and marketing purposes for the project outlined above and for the future practice of the researcher, and will remain the property of the researcher in perpetuity. These data will be shared securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and with the University's Data Protection Policy

Name ……..

Signature ……

Date ……

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator (or if the researcher is a student you can also contact the

Director of Studies). However, if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Head of Department.

Director of Studies Contact Details:

Dr Simon Bayly
Department of Drama,
Theatre and Performance
University of Roehampton
Roehampton Lane
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s.bayly@roehampton.ac.uk

020 8392 3582

Head of Department Contact Details:

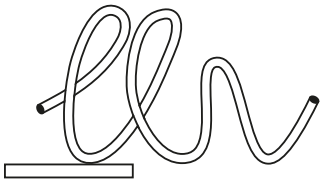
Dr Ann David
Department of Dance
University of Roehampton
Roehampton Lane
London
SW15 5PU

david@roehampton.ac.uk

020 8392 3658

Appendix C—*Recreation*

Programme Notes



Recreation

One way to see the arrangement we make in a theatre is like this: the people on the stage in the light are working, and the people sitting on the seats in the dark are not.

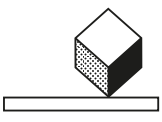
In *Recreation* something else is happening. The show is an invitation to come nearer to one another, to be both working and not-working whether on stage or off. In various ways, the performance invites you to work hard and to relax, to blur the distinction between being active and being receptive, between expecting something of yourself or someone else and not expecting anything, sort of pottering around in your experience.

The performers and spectators of *Recreation* are doing different things. Each person's work and non-work are different. Even each performers' work is different, not least because the cast comprises three performers who always do it and two local guests, who have been integrated over a couple of days. In both sets there are experienced performers and fresher movers in all sorts of ways. You might be able to guess who is who but probably not and I invite you not to care too much. In the same spirit, I hope that *Recreation* is a way to not quite know who is working for whom, and, maybe, to let go of such values in favour of something more joyous, mysterious, and pleasurable.

Credits

Choreographer: Gillie Kleiman
Performers: Amanda Drago, Victoria Guy, Kit Haigh, Jenn Harper, Chris Searle
Designer: Emer Tumilty
Lighting Designer & Production Manager: George Leigh
Artistic Advisor (dramaturgy): Roberta Jean
Artistic Advisor (sound): Nicola Singh
Producer: Beckie Darlington

Commissioned by ARC Stockton, Shoreditch Town Hall, and Yorkshire Dance. Originally supported by Arts Council England, Rajni Shah Projects, Dance4, and via South East Dance and Jerwood Charitable Foundation Dramaturg in Residence programme. With special thanks to Dance City and Northumbria University.



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Appendix D—Juncture Festival Brochure

Gillie Kleiman © Camilla Greenwell

Juncture 2016 curated by Gillie Kleiman

A festival of contemporary dance at Yorkshire Dance and other venues around Leeds

25 – 30 October 2016

www.yorkshiredance.com
www.juncturedance.com

Juncture was first curated for Yorkshire Dance in 2012 by Charlotte Vincent in an initiative designed to bring new work, professional development, critical debate and innovative performance practice to Yorkshire. Juncture 2014 was curated by Wendy Houstoun.

We know that everybody dances

The community dance movement, folk dance, YouTube dance classes and Strictly all tell us the same thing: everybody dances.

This third edition of Juncture, curated by Gillie Kleiman, collects artworks where the role of professional dancer is given to someone else, bringing artists, participants and their shared work into conversation about what happens when the dancing is handed over.

Yorkshire Dance is delighted to work with Gillie, whose interest spans an unusual spectrum of charged performance and dance.

Gillie has immense courage, curiosity and tenacity in pursuing depths of understanding whilst generating an infectious sense of adventure and fun.

The Yorkshire Dance team joke that I use the word 'rad' all the time.

Where 'radical' takes itself seriously, and almost always misses the mark when used in publicity material, 'rad' is tongue-in-cheek, reflexive, hopeful, whilst gesturing towards the future-possible.

Juncture is rad.

– Gillie Kleiman

Tickets & Passes

Box Office
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or book securely online:
www.juncturedance.com

Workshops Pass:
£50.00 (Conc. £40.00)

W Free entry to these events to workshop pass holders

Festival Pass:
£50.00 (Conc. £40.00)

F Free entry to these events to festival pass holders

Passes are available online, by phone or in person at Yorkshire Dance until Friday 30 September 2016

We Know That Everybody Dances

Yorkshire Dance

Tickets: £10.00 per workshop
Concessions: £8.00 per workshop

W

This six-part workshop departs from the premise that non-professional dancers, and professional dance workers of all kinds, can form different modes of collaboration in the making of choreographic works.

Drawing from works in Juncture 2016 and their practices at large, six innovative artists and artist-groups introduce their approaches in making work with non-professional participants, offering over three days a uniquely varied set of tools and objects for discussion which together expose a breadth of practice.

Participants will be encouraged to dive into the methods of each artist as well as drawing connections and divisions across the sessions.

Professional dance artists of all kinds are welcome in this workshop, as well as non-professional dancers. Sessions are bookable individually, but it is recommended to see this as an interconnected series, for which a Workshops Pass is available.

immigrants and animals

Tuesday 25 October
10.00am - 1.00pm

Gillie Kleiman

Tuesday 25 October
2.00pm - 5.00pm

Nicola Conibere

Wednesday 26 October
10.00am - 1.00pm

Jo Fong & Richard Gregory (Quarantine)

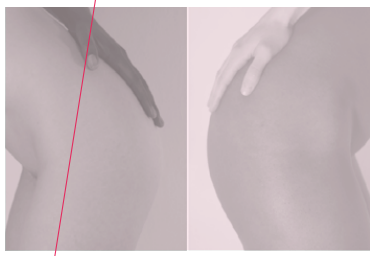
Wednesday 26 October
2.00pm - 5.00pm

Fitzgerald & Stapleton

Thursday 27 October
10.00am - 1.00pm

Sara Lindström

Thursday 27 October
2.00pm - 5.00pm



Laura Laura Double Penetration
© immigrants and animals

Festival Launch

Thursday 27 October
6.00pm - 6.45pm

Yorkshire Dance

Free: Everyone welcome

immigrants and animals

Laura Laura Double Penetration

Thursday 27 October
7.00pm - 8.30pm

Saturday 29 October
7.30pm - 9.00pm

Live Art Bistro

Tickets: £10.00
Concessions: £8.00

Age guidance: 16+

F

LOCKUPYOURDAUGHTERS.

Laura Laura is some women performing femininity. What the hell is femininity? Do we even have any? If not, how do we get some? Set to a soundtrack of songs you know, about love and other less important stuff. Almost shameless and sort of stylish, like a gangster movie with no men, no guns, no sex scenes, set in your bedroom.

Laura Laura is apparently like watching a film when you haven't seen the beginning and you don't see the end. Something of a dance show, something of a karaoke session, something of a gig.

A performance of technique, abandon, joy, frustration and not giving a fuck.

For Laura Laura Double Penetration – a double performance – immigrants and animals are joined by two other women to consecutively dance this dance born out of the frustration and alienation of not relating to assigned and supposed gender roles.

Supported by JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre (Finland), Les Trois C-L (Luxembourg) and the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

Swarm Sculptures © Amy Sinead Photography

Performance

Lucy Suggate

Swarm Sculptures

Friday 28 October
1.00pm - 3.00pm

Sunday 30 October
1.00pm - 3.00pm

The Tetley

Free: Everyone welcome

Swarm Sculptures is a durational movement installation created by dance artist Lucy Suggate.

Influenced by swarm intelligence as a choreographic process and the body as sculpture, the work takes the infectious nature of movement to transform the single human form into a communal and collective body.

Produced by Dance4. Commissioned by Dance4, Yorkshire Dance and NN Contemporary Art, Northampton. Supported by Nottingham Contemporary, Dance Base and Dancing Museums. Using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

Labour, Politics, Place & Family

Yorkshire Dance / The Tetley

Pay what you like

Labour — Who is or isn't working in these works? Does it have to be hard work? What does fun have to do with it?

Politics — To what extent are these works political acts, explicitly or implicitly? How does that relate to other kinds of political action? What kinds of politics are we talking about?

Place — What does it mean to make an artwork in a specific place? Does it matter if it has been made elsewhere, too? What is the relationship between community and location in a global, digital world?

Family — What does it mean to make an artwork with your nearest and dearest? How does this make us reshape our ideas about skill or expertise? What about when we go home?

Juncture's careful focus naturally invites conversation of and between works. This is fortified by a series of hosted discussions in an experimental format that combines a panel talk, Lois Weaver's Long Table, and Chisenhale Dance Space's Coffee Mornings, originally designed by this year's Juncture curator, Gillie Kleiman. Each talk departs from a singular concept arising through the curatorial process.

Labour

Friday 28 October
3.00pm - 5.00pm
Yorkshire Dance

with Nicola Conibere
immigrants and animals
Toby Lloyd & Andrew Wilson

Politics

Saturday 29 October
11.00am - 1.00pm
Yorkshire Dance

with Fitzgerald & Stapleton
Dr Sara Houston
Dr Rita Marcalo

Place

Saturday 29 October
4.30pm - 6.30pm
Yorkshire Dance

with Sara Lindström
Amy Letman
Annie Lloyd & Peter Reed

Family

Sunday 30 October
11.00am - 1.00pm
The Tetley

with Grace & Hope Surman
Beth & Tom Cassani
Will Edmondes

Performance

Fitzgerald & Stapleton

MINE

Friday 28 October
5.30pm - 6.30pm

Live Art Bistro

Tickets: £10.00
Concessions: £8.00

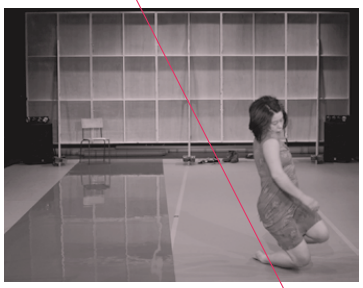
F

MINE is a choreography for the internet by Fitzgerald & Stapleton, choreographed with Jennifer Doyle, Grannymar, Poppy Kane and Kay O'Grady.

MINE was created through an online choreographic process involving Fitzgerald & Stapleton and four Irish females; Jenny Doyle, Poppy Kane, Grannymar and Kay O'Grady. The participants lived in different locations around Ireland and were aged between 8 and 63 years. A choreographic score, or compilation of language and visual materials to direct the dancer's attention during performance, was created from the written and visual responses of each of the participants to a series of questions and tasks posed by Fitzgerald & Stapleton.

Performed by Emma Fitzgerald and Áine Stapleton.

MINE was originally created as a commission from Choreographed.net



Jo Fong in Wallflower © Simon Banham

Quarantine

Wallflower

Friday 28 October
8.00pm - 9.30pm

Yorkshire Dance

Tickets: £15.00
Concessions: £12.00

Free admission to Festival Pass holders for this performance or the performance on Sat 29 Oct

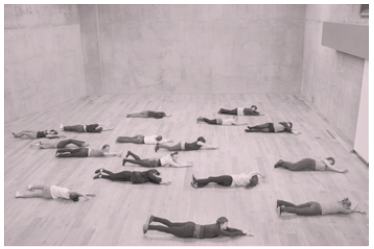
F

Memories of dancing alone all night at a party; of whirling across the stage at the Paris Opera Ballet; of silently, slowly revolving with a new lover on a canal boat at night; of a repeated tic – a bodily habit that feels like dancing; of walking alongside their mother; of racing with a dog across a beach; of dizzily spinning children; of weeping and dancing; of hitting the mark for Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker...

Can you remember every dance you've ever danced?

Wallflower is a dance marathon, a game that alters according to the players. Each night the performers choose what they want to reveal, what story of themselves they want to tell as they try to remember every dance they've ever danced. In the seats around the dance floor, the spectators bring their own histories and expectations. And somewhere between the spotlight and the sidelines, Wallflower happens.

On stage is a DJ, a disco-ball and a single chair. A fourth performer sits in the audience, recording every dance to add to an ever-expanding archive, a vast record of hundreds of memories which begins with first rehearsals and always ends with the last dance.



Assembly © Christian Kipp

Performance

Nicola Conibere

Assembly

Saturday 29 October
1.00pm - 4.00pm

Room 700
Leeds Central Library

Pay what you like

F

Assembly is a performance of several hours that explores shifts in relation between individual and collective bodies. Its changing configurations respond to those who come to see it; each time a spectator enters the room a performer will join the performance, leaving only when the same spectator departs, creating groupings of constant variation. Its performers enact a range of simple actions and formations that imply the organic and the organised.

Assembly proposes a quiet, playful and sometimes meditative place in which to attend the ways we exist in relation.

Spectators will be free to come and go throughout the duration of Assembly.

Limited capacity.

Nic Green in Wallflower © Simon Banham

Performance

Quarantine

Wallflower

Saturday 29 October
3.00pm - 8.00pm

Yorkshire Dance

Tickets: £15.00
Concessions: £12.00

Free admission to Festival Pass holders for this performance or the performance on Fri 28 Oct

F

For full details see p17.

This durational version of Wallflower transforms the performance into an epic, exhausting 5-hour piece, where the dancers grapple with effort of memory as bodies and minds tire, hurt, slow, repeat... and the audience are free to come and go throughout or to stay the full 5 hours.

© Live Art Bistro

Party

Karaoke Party

with Live Art Bistro

Saturday 29 October
9.00pm - late

Live Art Bistro

Tickets: £5.00

F

Responding to the theme of the professional's role being given over to 'everyone else', Live Art Bistro's Adam Young invites one and all to take a turn in the time-honoured tradition of Karaoke.

From Stars In Your Eyes to The Voice, the act covering popular music songs has long been one of the most cherished forms of entertainment in Britain. Amateurs take the role of the professional, with the lyrics projected publicly so everyone can also sing along.

Show off your vocal talents and style and demonstrate your performance flare – strike a pose, rile the crowd or show off a dance routine.

With the help of a local professional Karaoke MC, Adam promises a night of unforgettable fun for all – Karaoke with added performative elements. Dance Karaoke, even...

Dancing On My Own © Sara Lindström

Celebration / Film Screening

Sara Lindström

Dancing On My Own

This 20 minute screening takes place during the closing celebration

Sunday 30 October
3.00pm - 4.00pm

The Tetley

Free: Everyone welcome

Dancing On My Own is a short film that celebrates the simplicity and complexity of dancing.

Why is dancing to a song that we love so joyful? What activates our sensory creativity and what are our individual motives for dancing?

Sara Lindström has invited people of different ages and experiences to dance to their favourite music track in front of the camera. She has interviewed each dancer about why they've chosen their music and how it moves them, emotionally and physically.

When they dance, do they dance the song or their selves? Can dancing be an act of selfconsciousness and bodily becoming and is there such a thing as our own dance?

Or is dancing a collective becoming and result of culture and other influences? Is it a combination of both?

Dancing On My Own evokes a variety of sensations for both viewers and dancers, from humour and joy to nostalgia, sadness and absurdity.

Commissioned by Juncture.

Juncture 2016 Venues

Yorkshire Dance
3 St Peter's Buildings
St Peter's Square, Leeds LS9 AH

Live Art Bistro
1-2 Regent Street, Leeds LS2 7QA

The Tetley
Hunslet Road, Leeds LS10 1JQ

Room 700
Leeds Central Library
Calverley Street, Leeds LS1 3AB

YORKSHIRE DANCE

Yorkshire Dance champions the value of dance and its development in Yorkshire. We do so by raising standards, increasing knowledge and understanding and fostering creativity and innovation.

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Gillie Kleiman's curatorship of Juncture 2016 is part of Artists Curating Dance, a Yorkshire Dance project supported by Jerwood Charitable Foundation.

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With thanks to the many people who have supported this festival through their contributions to the Spirit of Juncture fundraising campaign.

Juncture, October 2016

Date	Time	Artists	Event Name	Event Type	Venue
Tue 25	10.00am - 1.00pm	immigrants and animals	We Know That Everybody Dances	Workshop	YD
Tue 25	2.00pm - 5.00pm	Gillie Kleiman	We Know That Everybody Dances	Workshop	YD
Wed 26	10.00am - 1.00pm	Nicola Conibere	We Know That Everybody Dances	Workshop	YD
Wed 26	2.00pm - 5.00pm	Jo Fong & Richard Gregory (Quarantine)	We Know That Everybody Dances	Workshop	YD
Thu 27	10.00am - 1.00pm	Fitzgerald & Stapleton	We Know That Everybody Dances	Workshop	YD
Thu 27	2.00pm - 5.00pm	Sara Lindström	We Know That Everybody Dances	Workshop	YD
Thu 27	6.00pm - 6.45pm	Gillie Kleiman	Festival Launch	Celebration	YD
Thu 27	7.00pm - 8.30pm	immigrants and animals	Laura Laura Double Penetration	Performance	LAB
Fri 28	1.00pm - 3.00pm	Lucy Suggate	Swarm Sculptures	Performance	TT
Fri 28	3.00pm - 5.00pm	Various	Labour	Talk	YD
Fri 28	5.30pm - 6.30pm	Fitzgerald & Stapleton	MINE	Performance	LAB
Fri 28	8.00pm - 9.30pm	Quarantine	Wallflower	Performance	YD
Sat 29	11.00pm - 4.00pm	Various	Politics	Talk	YD
Sat 29	1.00pm - 4.00pm	Nicola Conibere	Assembly	Performance	R700
Sat 29	3.00pm - 8.00pm	Quarantine	Wallflower	Performance	YD
Sat 29	4.30pm - 6.30pm	Various	Place	Talk	YD
Sat 29	7.30pm - 9.00pm	immigrants and animals	Laura Laura Double Penetration	Performance	LAB
Sat 29	9.00pm - late	Live Art Bistro and YOU	Karaoke Party	Party	LAB
Sun 30	11.00am - 1.00pm	Various	Family	Talk	TT
Sun 30	1.00pm - 3.00pm	Lucy Suggate	Swarm Sculptures	Performance	TT
Sun 30	3.00pm - 4.00pm	Gillie Kleiman	Festival Close	Celebration	TT
Sun 30	3.00pm - 4.00pm	Sara Lindström	Dancing On My Own	Film Screening	TT

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YORKSHIRE DANCE

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